

Bobby Dailey

I have known and loved Don for a long time. He was a big influence on and a mentor to both Mike and I after we came to the Lord. I think when the Lord was passing out gifts, he dipped into grace, mercy, and kindness several times and sprinkled them on Don. So many of my memories of him are how he extended these to so many people. He was such an encourager and had such a pastor's heart.

He told us his time as pastor at Jackson Christian Center was very difficult for him. But for those of us sitting under his care, it was a blessing. He honestly didn't understand what profound truth God gave him to share each Sunday. He was a student of God's word and a very gifted teacher. I can still remember several of his sermons. They tended to be illustrative, simple and profound. I still remember many of them. I remember one where he used a carpenter's plumb line to illustrate our alignment with God's Word. The picture of him standing holding the plumb line has stayed with me all these years.

My most treasured memories are of Don as a close and dear friend to my Mike. I think they complimented each other: Don trusting, full of mercy...Mike, mmm not so much; so they played off of each other. Don took Mike on his first mission trip to Tecate, Mexico to an orphanage. Over many years they prayed together, spent time hanging out together sharing guy time. Their group—The Old Wineskins—was quite a group...Dave Neville, Doug Howard, Doug Eggers, Mike, and when in town, Jim Watt...and any other visiting male was welcome to join them for their Tuesday morning breakfast. (When Mike was first going to these breakfasts, I thought they were "prayer" breakfasts...and there was some of that, but I believed they mostly spent time solving the world's problems...and just enjoying each other's company.)

When our sweet Carrie went to be with Jesus, it was Don and Gene Ferrin who came to our house in the wee hours of the morning to tell us what had happened. Don took charge of the details of the service for her at the Baptist Church (because our chapel at JHCC wasn't big enough)...but as I think back on it now...it probably wasn't actually Don who took charge of the details...it was probably Jo. In the ensuing days Don was there for Mike to pray with him and to be the friend who walked with him through that difficult time.

For me, I can still hear him saying, "really?" when I would tell him how something he had shared in a teaching or something he had said influenced my thinking or touched my heart.

He would do that Don chuckle (can you hear it, too). He just had no clue the impact his teaching...his life...had on other people. So often at home group we would hear him say that he wasn't sure if he had done enough...when in fact he did more than enough.

I miss our Sunday gatherings. I miss his laughter, his tears, his depth of teaching God's Word, and his awe of God. He modeled an amazing example of deep love and loyalty to Jo as she went through her troubled times. His grief when she was gone, tore our hearts to watch. But through it all, he was still the gentle and merciful Don, who continued to teach us God's grace through his life example.

I miss him a lot. But, that being said, I can see pieces and parts of him live through his Godfearing sons. Each one carries many of their father's gifts, so Don really does live on through them. Though I miss him, and I miss Jo...for they were really such a precious package deal...I look forward to a great reunion! I know there certainly was raucous rejoicing in the heavenlies when Don joined the glorious throng!

