My father Yinkann Wen: Beloved of God - Lifelong Learner - Cheerful Servant

My father passed away on June 11 after having been diagnosed with cancer in January. Up until he became ill, he was so full of energy and activity. In the last months, in contrast, he entered a period of stillness and rest. He was also mostly silent after radiation therapy took away his voice. When I visited my parents in March, it was a surprise to see him so tired, when usually he was so energetic and robust, moving around the house with quick steps and a cheerful “Hello!” whenever he would see us in person.

However, even as he endured chemo treatments and these months of stillness, Dad was still living as the Beloved of God, and he was still trying to learn and serve others as he could. Looking back, I see these were important themes the Lord shaped in him over time.

**Beloved of God**

The most important thing Dad left behind was his love for Jesus. My parents accepted Christ before I was born, and because of that I’ve always known God was there. Only recently have I realized what a blessing this was, to *always* have known God was there and He loved us. I’m thankful my mom and dad said yes to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him and that they put the Lord first in our home and let everything else fall into place.

This love for the Lord and trust in Him had profound implications for my brother, Clement, and me. My parents both worked in economic development, and in contrast I abhorred math and was terrible at it. My parents did not despair, but instead they allowed me to study psychology and supported me through seminary. They supported Clement as well through seminary. They never said, “I wish you guys were making a lot of money so you could provide for us later.” They did not pressure us, because they trusted the Lord would put us exactly where He wanted us, and they had peace about our future (and their *own* future) because it was in the Lord’s hands. The faith with which they lived - because they knew God’s love and care - were a significant example for us.

The only time Dad had a problem with my studies was when I was in high school and I told him, “I already have an A for the first quarter and an A for the second quarter, so I only need a C on the final exam to keep the A.” He was shocked by this kind of logic and had to say emphatically, “Always do your best!”

When Dad was diagnosed with cancer, the Lord told me not to worry about him, as He and my dad had been walking together for a long time - even longer than I had been alive - and He would continue to provide what he needed every day. What depths of knowledge and closeness with God did my father have after all those years that would sustain him through his treatment? What lessons had the Lord taught Dad that I had yet to learn as I grow older? I could only imagine.

Even during his last day in the hospital, my dad sensed the Lord telling him he would be with Him soon. A few hours later he passed away peacefully. This day was the wonderful completion of a long walk together on earth. It was also just the beginning of their eternity together. We were comforted the Great Shepherd, who loves my dad even more than any of we do, broke through the fog of impending death and gave such reassurance to him that **He** was the one constant in this life and the next.

*(see “My Last Testimony” at the end.)*

**Always Learning**

Another theme in my father’s life was that he loved to learn. My aunts and uncles note that he had always been a good student in Taiwan, and he admirably earned a PhD in a foreign language in a new land. When I was growing up and Costco still had rows of books in the center of the store, Dad would look at all the new books while the rest of us shopped. Later, when Nate and I moved to Spain, he gave us his Spanish textbook (he had started learning Spanish a few years prior) and enjoyed researching Spanish culture when he and Mom visited. He also enjoyed reading the latest church, nutrition, and financial developments and often passed along articles he found interesting.

My dad also really did love numbers! When we went to see *Mulan* in the theater, he turned to us right after the movie ended and suddenly announced, “1 hour and 23 minutes!” He had timed the movie on his watch. He also followed exchange rates and the weather in different parts of the world daily. Whenever we talked on Skype he would say, “It’s hot in Spain today! 90 degrees!” Or, “It’s nice there today - 70 degrees!” When I was in Europe for a summer in college he numbered all of his letters to me: *This is the first letter.* *This is the second letter.* He kept track of them all the way up to the 13th letter.

Numbers were a passion and such a natural, daily part of my dad’s life. It’s wonderful to see how the Lord brought together his love for numbers, finance, and the Bible to serve others through his speaking and writing.

**A Cheerful Servant**

The Lord gave my parents opportunities to serve together, both in organized ministries and in everyday life. They both enjoyed helping with practical needs. I remember them picking up older Gong Gongs and Po Pos for church on Sundays, and they also brought others to their medical appointments. Every time we prepared to visit Taiwan, Mom and Dad filled a suitcase with vitamins for our relatives.

Our kids were all born via C-section, and my parents came after each birth to care for us as I recovered. They cheerfully crammed into our small living space for six weeks, and my mom cooked delicious food and took care of the newborn while my dad shuttled the other kids to the library or to preschool. One very special duty he had was to change diapers for the toddlers. As he changed our son’s dirty diaper one day, he said jokingly, “Apparently you are the most powerful person here, since when you go to the bathroom, I must deal with it!”

In reflecting now, I believe my father was a faithful servant who knew he was loved for who he was and not what he did. This knowledge enabled him to happily change diapers and serve people through giving them rides, and it also encouraged him to happily share with many people what he had learned from Scriptures and from his time in economics and finance. This knowledge of the Lord’s love for him also enabled him to be content during his last months of stillness and silence when his productivity necessarily slowed down. He wrote many times, “I am grateful to God; His grace is enough each day.” On Dad’s last day, when the Lord summoned him home, His grace certainly was unmistakable and clear.

I will miss my father so much and look forward to seeing him again. In the meantime, I’m grateful for his long and rich life of loving God, his constant posture of learning, and his deep care for others.

“My Last Testimony  
June 11, 2020

今早凌晨約五時 [Today at 5am]  
I was very uncomfortable with the new oxygen mask  
 A voice inside me said 'You will be with me soon,   
這幾天你就要跟我在一起了 你在世上的事工已經完成了'  
My mind said so soon? I just started my pneumonia treatment.   
The voice seemed to come from the Lord  
And the voice said, 'You have finished your work in this world’  
Then about 11:30am during a family Skype conference-call Kweiyin shared her conversation with Dr. Chan.   
My condition is worsening  
Treatment for pneumonia is not helping   
May be combining with chemo effects   
My life is ending   
My mind is peaceful and I think the voice is from the Lord.  
I am happy to be resting with the Lord.”