

Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers

January 2012 Devotional Page

by

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Although I have enjoyed reading the many e-mail posts and exchanges, I have never shared anything with the entire CFAMC online body these past 7 years. Recently, though, I was privileged to witness a profound beauty and love – the sort that makes painters grab their paintbrushes and composers reach for their pencils.

About 3 months ago I was appointed a deacon at my church and shortly thereafter sent to a nursing home with flowers for Charles and his wife, Dorothy (Dottie) – both of them in their later 90s. What I did not know was that his wife had late stage Alzheimer's and that Charles had been on the same floor as the Alzheimer's patients for the past 5 years so that he could look in on his wife on a daily basis. After delivering the flowers to Charles and hearing about his experiences in World War II, we went to deliver the flowers to his wife, Dottie.

He moved down the hallway slowly with a walker, hunched over with age. When we opened the door the aides were just getting Dottie out of bed and into a chair. She looked scared and confused. Once we were alone Charles said, "Sweetheart, this young man has come to bring flowers for you." After handing her the flowers she continued to stare at me (which I learned later was a symptom of Alzheimer's). Charles prompted her to say "Thank you" - her only words to either of us during the 20 minutes or so we were there.

Charles spoke tenderly to her and eventually brought down a photo of them with their family when they were maybe 15 years younger. Dottie stared at the photo for some time and then a quivering finger slowly stretched out and pointed at the image. At this point Charles said, "Who's that? Do you know who that is? Yes... that's you sweetheart!" and then leaned over and gently kissed her cheek. While holding back my tears, I expressed to him my amazement and awe at his love and dedication to his wife all these years. To which he looked at me kind of surprised and said, "Well Devin ... this is the love of my life."



As I drove home the Holy Spirit impressed on me the magnitude of what I had just witnessed. How many times a day does God beckon to us, calling our names, desiring that we should recognize Him in the beauty of His people, His creation, Himself? Sometimes we live as though we have forgotten our first love ... our memory of Him has grown dim and we fail to recognize His love and grace in our lives. We forget His face.

Charles' effort was great, but God's is even greater. He whispers daily, presently to each of

us: "You, _____, are the love of my life. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. Though you may forget Me and fail to recognize Me, I will never forget you nor fail to recognize My own creation."

Dottie passed away a week ago and I had the privilege of being invited by Charles to play violin at her memorial service this past Saturday. My selections were Meditation from "Thais" and my own arrangement of "Balm in Gilead." This account is my other tribute to Dorothy and Charles.

"...As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you" [Isaiah 62:5]

"... you whom I have upheld since you were conceived, and have carried since your birth. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." [Isaiah 46:3-4]

[Editorial disclaimer: No, the picture above is not one of Dottie and Charles. It is a public domain picture I found that evoked in my mind what I think Dottie and Charles might have looked like, though. —C. Beck]