

Perspective

by Wayne Goff

My mother passed away rather suddenly, unexpectedly when I was twenty years old. For years I could not properly process her death, whether due to shock, inexperience in life, or some other unknown cause. I vividly remember thinking that when she died at 42 that she had lived a good, long life! Years later, after I had preached the funeral of *someone else's mother*, I went home and cried uncontrollably – by myself, alone. My mother's death had finally sunk in. My perspective had changed.

My father passed away at the ripe old age of ninety-one and I am now sixty-six. My grief and sorrow come in great waves of uncontrollable emotion. I could not help but think of the words of the hymn that says “when sorrow like sea billows roll.”

One would think that the grief over my father's death would be minimal. After all, he was an old man. But grief and sorrow have little to do with the age of a loved one when they die. Grief and sorrow are magnified by the depth of love and appreciation one has for that person. Having been **blessed** to have a father for *all of my long life* who loved and cared about me, about all of his children, about his brothers and sisters, about each of his three wives, and about the many brethren whom he helped in a thousand different ways will always be a tragic, painful loss. For one such as him, there is never a good time to say goodbye. How different my perspective is now from that of a young man.

Dad's self-appointed role in life was to be a giver, caretaker and nurturer. He never quit worrying about his children. He never interfered with their lives, but he was always there as a mountain of wisdom, love and caring. Everyone in the family knew that they could go to him for sound advice in times of trouble. Hundreds of brethren sought his counsel in their most difficult times. He never failed to give them comfort and hope. His country-bred wisdom might cause one to chuckle even in such difficult times. So as I write this with tears streaming down my face while my mind laughs at his expressions, try to understand that – from my perspective, I have lost much for a little while – from Dad's perspective, he and the angels are rejoicing.

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