“Go with Jesus.”

Reflection by Elia King, Estes Park, CO

When we gather together in San Diego in February, we’ll sing a song together called “Lord of All.” It’s a song partly inspired by our life in Colorado (there are lyrics about fires and floods). But the third verse in particular was inspired by my grandfather.

In our doubt and belief
When we cannot hear or see
We say Jesus, You are Lord of all
And in life, until death
May we use our every breath
Saying Jesus, You are Lord of all

For most of my early grade school years, my grandparents were my school bus drivers.

Numbers on the odometer were of no consequence. Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night could stay our couriers from their appointed rounds. So faithfully, we rode and sang our way to class, daring ourselves to be Daniels and leaning on the Lord’s side as we went.

At the end of every trip, my grandfather would pat me on the head and offer the same benediction.
“Go with Jesus.”

At the time, I didn’t understand the significance of what he said. Even as an adult, I’m learning what it means. As a boy, I assumed he was just telling me to be good, or planting the seed in my conscience that God was always watching. But now I recognize that Pa was praying for more than good behavior, or even protection, when he would smile at me and say those words.

"Go with Jesus."

Of course, I’ve realized now that in those few precious words, Pa was praying that I would learn to follow Jesus so closely that I couldn’t help but to show Him to the people I came in contact with.

My grandfather was passionate about his politics, and made it a priority to stay in the know with regard to current events. But whether or not you agreed with his political opinions, Pa had a way of bringing the conversation around to talking about Jesus. The hope he found in Jesus shaped his relationships, and guided his daily interactions.

Toward the end of his life, my grandfather wrestled with complications from diabetes. His vision and hearing began to fail, and he often seemed like just a shell of the man that I remembered from earlier days. But at the end of every visit, he would still call out his familiar benediction to us from his armchair as we crossed the threshold.

I don’t remember many heavy theological discussions with my grandfather. I don’t know how he interpreted prophecy or troublesome texts from the Old Testament. But I will always remember how he encouraged me to follow Jesus wherever I went.

So today, may you be a voice of encouragement to those closest around you, that in all they do or say, they too would “go with Jesus.”
Recalibrate

1. Who are the people in your life that have reminded you, through words or deeds, what it looks like to “go with Jesus”?
2. How might life be different if we took those words seriously?
3. What attitudes or opinions might change?
4. How might we relate differently to stressful people or circumstances?

Feel free to send any thoughts or comments to Elia King.