



WHO ARE YOU LIVING TO SERVE AND DYING TO MEET?

by John Fischer

A couple weeks ago, on Mothers Day, a friend of mine, who had managed to survive a hard regimen of cancer treatment only to discover the disease still at large in his body, asked his family, "Would you all like me to quietly slip out the back door or hang in there and keep trying to beat this?"

The question took them by surprise and though no one had an immediate answer for him, one of his daughters went home and wrote the following: "You are the most disciplined, diligent, creative man I have ever known. If you can apply the same strength, enthusiasm, and perseverance in fighting this that you've demonstrated your whole life, I know you can do it. However, I also want you to know that whenever you hear our Lord calling your name from the back door, go with him, because that will be the same moment that I'll change my mind and want you to be with him instead."

Exactly one week later, Clark heard Jesus calling and slipped out the back door to join him.

It seemed the right call for a man whose primary gift in life had been to serve. Servants usually go in and out back doors, unnoticed by the guests and out of the way of the daily traffic in the house. For Clark, it was a choice to give up his will and retreat into Jesus' hands, but by "slipping out" he didn't mean sneaking out. He only meant to go quietly, unnoticed, and with little fanfare, much like he lived life.

Clark has lived his life around back doors. It has just been his way of doing things. I wonder if even his consideration to "stay and fight" was not for him, but to stay, if required, to fight for his life for the sake of the lives he loves. As if he were saying, *Can I rest, or do you need me to stay for your sakes?* That's the way a servant thinks. Always thinking of someone else.

Paul, the apostle, had a similar dilemma toward the end of his life. "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this ... I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith." (Philippians 1:23-25)

What a philosophy of life! You live to serve others, you die to be with Christ. And between the two, well ... it's a toss-up. So live today thinking about who you are living to serve ... and dying to meet!