

# Ministry Moments

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In January of 2006 I began writing a correspondence series titled *Ministry Moments* for the monthly supporters of the Sharing Org. In *Ministry Moments* I highlighted key moments that happened in the ministry and my own reactions to those moments. I've since received so many positive comments concerning that series that I have decided to begin adding it to each newsletter. These *Ministry Moments* that I share are my most personal thoughts about what I've experienced in the previous month. My words are not always flowery or politically correct but they come straight from the heart – the heart that is ever being challenged and changed by our God who seems to surprise me every time I turn around.

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November 2007

Residents who have Alzheimer's don't just wake-up one morning having lost themselves but rather they grow gradually less and less, day after day, able to remember things. The residents who effect me the most emotionally are the residents who are in this transition – *and they know it*. A certain gentleman came to one of the facilities earlier this year – Sometimes he was in his right mind and other times he was not. The gentleman attended the services regularly but he passed away during the time that I was laid up because of my knee surgery. His roommate told this story of how he came to pass.

When the gentleman would come to himself he would comment that he wanted to go home. "If I could just go home I could die happy" he would tell his roommate. This went on for months. As the gentleman would have times of awareness he would tell his roommate that if he could just go home he could die in peace. So his roommate told him to ask his children if he could go home. So he asked his children if he could go home and of course the children said "no" and that was that. In the months that passed the gentleman would periodically come to himself and somehow remember that he had asked his children to let him go home. Then each time he would call his children and plead with them to let him go home. He kept telling them that if he could just go home he could die happy. And each time his children would respond with an adamant "no".

One time, after months of pleading with his children to let him go home, his children finally relented and arranged for their dad to go back to the farm. The very first night that the gentleman went home he went to bed and then to sleep never to awake again. In his own home, in his own bed, he laid his head down upon his own pillow and peacefully and happily died.

Then our brother truly went home.

~ John