

“Moving Day”

2 Corinthians 5:1-8

March 12, 2010

When Mary was growing up, she was mobile. Her family moved a lot. After she married Laird Allender and moved into 218 East Madison Avenue, after quite awhile, she wanted to move again. But there she stayed for half a century. Some time after Laird died, she married Gene Cutshall and Mary finally got a new house. To be sure, a condo. But she moved. Since then she moved to Oakwood Village—another new home. Mary was finally getting her wish. Then she moved from Oakwood Village to...Oakwood Village. By now Mary was needing some skilled care. Then she needed some additional care and moved again within Oakwood Village. Three years ago, Mary decided to move to North Carolina and did so. For a woman who always wanted to move and never did, she sure seems to have moved a lot. In fact, she seemed a bit nomadic, pitching her tent first here and then there. Hers became a very different lifestyle than living in one house for 50 years.

In the course of these latter day moves, especially this past year, Mary has done a lot of sighing and moaning and groaning. Her 87-year-old house had become a burden to her. She hurt. She was immobile. She couldn't do for herself. And sometimes she let you know about it. Mostly though, she remained content—after having several grandchildren and great grandchildren, and a couple of great-great grandchildren—to wait on one more great-granddaughter...and to wait on one more new house.

When she lived with Laird, there were no guarantees they would ever move. Indeed, I

suppose the opposite may have been true. She probably felt there was some guarantee that they would never move away from Madison Avenue. And really, why would you want to? I mean there are so many great things about that place and the people who made it a home for all of us. Some of the grandkids have been on Facebook... Did you ever think the word Facebook would show up at Mary's funeral? Well, it has and I am happy to be able to share some of their memories of that house with you.

the alley right next to the house, the creepy basement, Aunt Susie's 60's posters, the player organ,....too much to write it all down. I'll miss you MawMaw. You were always there for me. I love you.

Mama and Papa's basement was the only basement that didn't creep me out (the attic was a different story). I used to sit down there and talk to Mama while she ironed. I remember her ironing sheets and I couldn't understand why anyone would iron sheets. She said it made them softer.

Jergens lotion in the "one" bathroom, plastic on the dining room chairs and plastic runner/rug on the hall carpet leading to the room with the "davenport" (wasn't the davenport a hard leather?- it sounded like plastic when you sat on it :) Also loved the front porch and Loved the the upstairs- got to play with Aunt Susie's barbies! Millions of collectable plates- playing the piano (which is now at my house) and the organ. And of course, the holiday staples...pineapple cream cheese on celery and grandma's famous chocolate cake.

her class reunions *every* year, her pecan pie, her beautiful bows for presents, done with much love, her socks with the little balls, her lists to do for each day, washing on

Monday...washing machine *and* hand washings....ironing underwear and sheets, roly pies,
her love of the Cincinnati Reds, her crummy decks of cards for solitaire

MTV(they had cable; we didn't), Doctor Who (I only watched it there), lots of
elephants, PawPaw's pipes, the front porch, the davenport (what's that again?), the air
conditioned attic (where we slept while visiting), dad's comic book collection (why it was
there I still don't know, it's my moms mom), one bathroom

MawMaw passed away today. It's hard when things like this happen. I decided to
think about all of the good things that I associate with my grandmother: Archway
cookies, Pringles, sour cream cookies, pudding with the skin on top, double broiler
frosting (that's for you, mom), home made ice cream

No doubt, you have your own memories of that house and home. So did Mary. As great
as these memories are though, they are as nothing compared to the mansion that has been
guaranteed to her by God. These past many years, God has been preparing Mary for a new house.
In this house, she needs no skilled care because she will hurt no more. She needs no aid,
prosthetic, or wheelchair because she walks on glorified legs. She needs no counselor to assuage
her fears and tears because she lives forever in the presence of a Wonderful Counselor, Prince of
Peace, Mighty God.

What is mortal has been swallowed up by life. This life is real and eternal. It was
guaranteed to Mary by him who never breaks his promises and I can assure you she never wants
to move again. Mary has walked through this life pitching her tent by faith, not by sight. Now she
walks by sight with God outside of time in a glorified body. She will never pull up stakes again.
Here's why: her resurrection body is glorious for no other reason really, than this: that spiritual

body allows her to be in the immediate company of Jesus. And so, she will never, ever again want to move. She is happy, having gained the guarantee of God.

Some people would say that it is a sad thing that Mary and others have to suffer decline. The Corinthian Church was saying the same thing about the Apostle Paul. He said that while the outer nature is wasting away, the inner person is being transformed daily. The things that so many of us prize—youth, health, and happiness—will eventually be destroyed one way or the other. So all that truly matters is the inner person. This body is transient, even fleeting. The inner being is eternal. Those who are hidden with Christ in God will have their decrepit, decaying outer nature replaced with an eternal glory beyond imagination.

Mary was guaranteed this glory. God placed in her his Spirit as earnest of his pledge. Many people look upon the Spirit as only power or emotion. But here Paul thought of the Spirit of God in terms of that quiet confidence that is the Christian's. It is the undeniable presence of God's Spirit that produces slow, inner renewal and in the end, total, glorious transformation.

This is what your sister, your aunt, your mom, your mawmaw, great grand, and great-great now knows in eternal reality. Life in this fleshy tent involves suffering by faith. We must suffer with confident endurance, knowing that resurrection awaits us who believe. The aches and pains of this material existence try to conceal the inner transformation and make us give up hope. Mary did not give up hope. Here is how I know; it's a personal story that *you* should know. During the last hours, Susan had been called in to the nursing home because they thought Mary was failing. We had been up there twice the night before and then again around five o'clock Monday morning. We sat with her a few more hours when, around eight o'clock, I needed to run home to say goodbye to my sister who was visiting from out of state. I had no sooner gotten down

the interstate when Susan called to say Mary was gone. I turned around and came back and Susan reported this story of Mary's last moments. Susan once again took her mom's hand and said, "It's okay, mom. Jesus said, 'Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.'" At that very instant, Mary stopped breathing. I know Mary knew. Now you know, if you did not know before. She never gave up the inward hope, despite the outward decline.

Mary had something to look forward to because she had *someone* to look forward to. As much as she longed to see again her parents, her twin and other siblings, Laird, Gene, and others, the real yearning was to be with her God. She yearns no more. She aches no longer. She is with Jesus in glory, for to be with Jesus *is* glory.

Mary is all moved into her final, glorious house—one that Jesus has been preparing her whole life. If this is not true, he would never have told her so. It is finished. She is moved in. Mary's moving days are over.