

Trust Me

Words: Andy Gleiser

Music: Reba Snyder

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***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)***

In April 2016, my friend and co-laborer in the gospel, Doug Gray, succumbed to cancer and met His Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Doug had pastored a church in eastern Indiana for several years and had invited me on numerous occasions to preach. But beyond the preaching connection, Doug and his family have been dear friends of my family. His son and daughter-in-law have been members of Burge Terrace Baptist Church (Indianapolis) for many years, and their children (Doug's grandchildren) are wonderful friends and playmates of our kids! His passing touched many lives.

Doug's smile and laughter were contagious, but so was his passion for Christ, his family, church, and community. I enjoyed times of walking the streets of Liberty, IN, with him, talking to fellow Hoosiers about Christ. I was especially delighted to pray with him in his office before worship services. Oh to hear him talk to his Lord! I miss my friend.

Upon hearing of his cancer diagnosis, I texted his son Daniel to ask if his father had a favorite verse. As you may have gathered, Proverbs 3:5-6 was especially precious to Doug. Sometimes I write stanzas out of order, and "Trust Me" was definitely composed that way. The third stanza deals with trusting God in the face of death, and I finished that one first. Then I wrote the first stanza with particular emphasis on Proverbs 3:5-6 and Psalm 23. Finally, I finished with the second stanza with a special nod to Isaiah 9:6 and Colossians 3:2. I did not want to "put words in God's mouth," so I was careful to say what He has revealed of Himself.

In an act that can only be attributed to God's providence, I was preaching for a church in Indianapolis the week of Doug's funeral, and so I was able to attend. Susan, his widow, asked me to have a small part in the funeral by singing the hymn I wrote for her husband. Now that was an honor...

I will see Doug again. His life was hidden with Christ in God. So is mine. But until that day, I will keep trusting the God Doug knew and trusted even through death.