

JON MEYER

KEEP YOUR FORK

A simple reminder that the best is yet to come

I don't know where I first found this story, but I love what it has to say. There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. As she was getting her things in order, she contacted her pastor and asked him to come to her house to discuss the arrangements for her funeral. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what Scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted

my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming—like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my and I want them to wonder, 'What's with the fork?' Then I want you to tell them, 'Keep your fork. The best is yet to come.' ”

My family suffered a great loss last year when my mother succumbed to

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to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible.

Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the woman suddenly remembered something else.

“There's one more thing,” she said excitedly.

“What's that?” came the pastor's reply.

“This is very important,” the woman said. “I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand.”

The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say.

“That surprises you, doesn't it,” the woman asked.

“Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request,” said the pastor.

The woman explained her request. “In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners,” she said, “I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It was

cancer after a lengthy battle. As Easter approaches, I am once again reminded of what has enabled us to rejoice in her passing. She has realized the hope she had in life. Christ's death on the cross enabled her to be with God. It is what all Christians hope for.

John 11:25 records these words of Christ. “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”

I am encouraged and challenged by this to recommit my life to Christ, to examine myself and see if I am following Christ in all the ways I should. Most of all, I am encouraged by what these words of Christ mean. Even though life can be difficult, even though the world seems to be on the brink of destruction, even though evil seems to be triumphant at times, in the end our lives are in good hands. As the woman in the story said, “The best is yet to come.” □

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