

# Grace Notes

## The Empty Chair

11.23.09



**"Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.....Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." (Philippians 1:3; James 4:13-14)**

There I sat in a Youth Pastor seminar with a couple hundred others listening to one of my favorite speakers, Billy Beacham. I loved listening to Billy because he always had a way of speaking on a deeper level than the normal trappings of Student Ministry.

This talk would be no different.

He began his talk by saying, *"Look around you. Statistics tell us that, by this time next year, at least one of you will not be among us. Your chair will be empty."* You could've heard a pin drop. Simply because we all knew how true that statement was.

Without sounding cryptic, Billy went on to elaborate that he was not necessarily referring to death. He was also referring to statistical evidence supporting the number of ministers getting out of the ministry due to being severely hurt by the church, or due to their own moral failure.

Regardless, it made me think about James' statement cited above - *"What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."*

I think about presiding over the funeral of my dear friend, Dan Lair, just a few weeks back. And the recent tragic death of the teenage girl from Seagraves.

And I am reminded not only of how fragile life truly is - but how it is indeed a gift.

Holidays can be downright nuts - especially if you have to travel. But this Thanksgiving holiday, slow down.....pause a little longer to consider the gift given you through the lives of your family & friends—before their chair is empty.

**Soli Deo Gloria, Nick**

