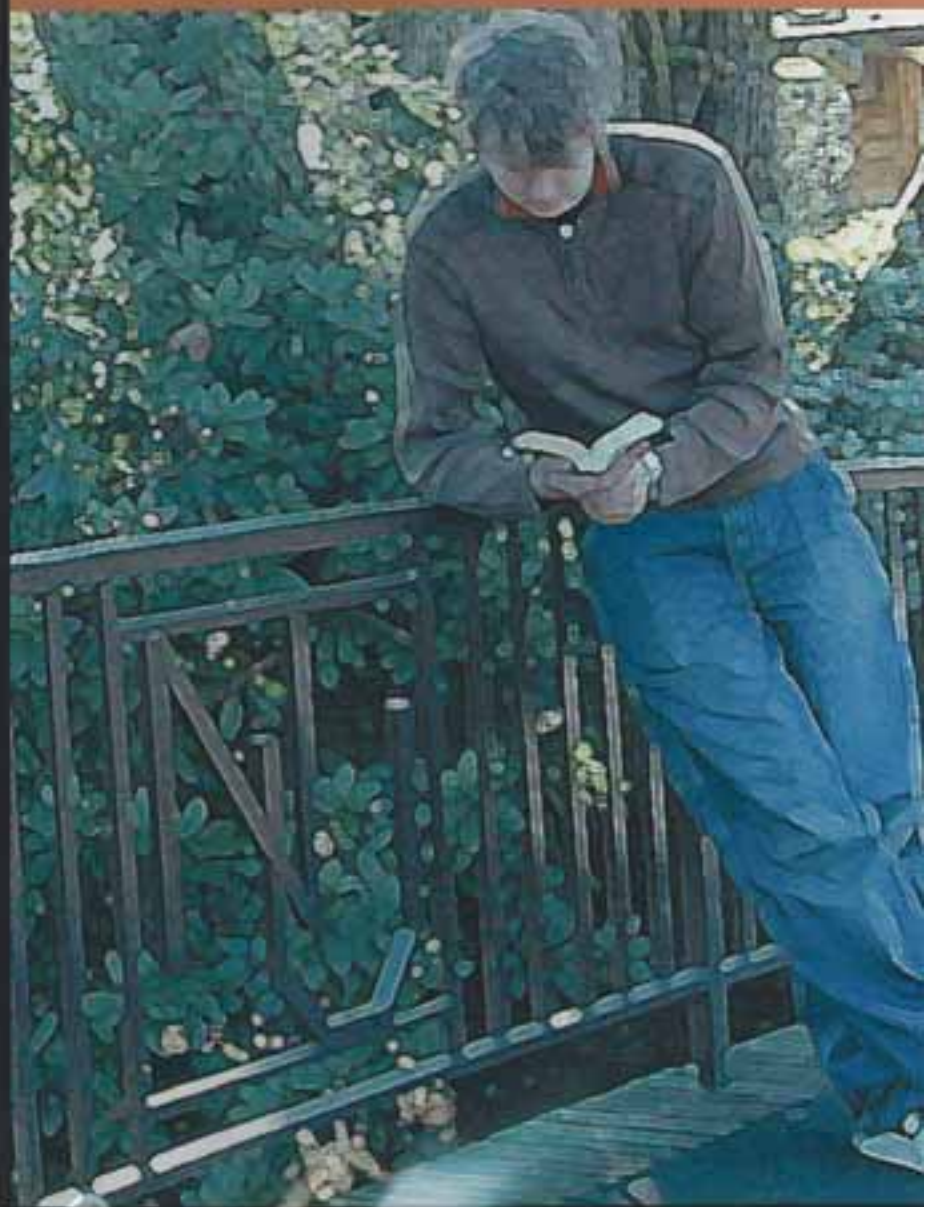


Last Night in Virginia
and Other Stories

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Northwest University
Presidential Scholarship Portfolio

by



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After Everything



For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

- Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

I got out of the car and tugged at my collar. Cold out here. Standing by the Puget Sound, I looked around and sniffed. The waves lapped gently along the shore. Fog hid Whidbey and anything else ten feet from my eyes. Yet, in the fog, lights still shown in the distance, appearing to hover like fireflies. Buttoning up my coat, I began walking down the pier. And, I began thinking.

"Really..." is the usual response. "That's cool. I mean, most people your age don't say, 'I want to be a family and marriage counselor.' That's really cool."

I guess most people don't think that the average nineteen year old cares about making his career helping families get better. I mean, many nineteen year olds can't wait to get away from their families.

But, although many people can't picture a younger guy having this dream, I can. In fact, I can't wait.

I'm shooting for having my own practice. I'm looking

forward to seeing my name on a door, to have my own website, and to have a name in the phone book because I can't wait to begin helping families.

As I've gotten older, I have realized the importance of family and marriage to the society of humanity. Without either of these institutions, the entire human race would be in shambles. Yet, that's the trend these days. With monetarily-crazed people, a declining level of maturity, a loss of morality, and the common mindset that families (especially children) are more of a burden than a blessing, we are quickly losing society's basic building block.

So, I can picture myself in the future helping families. I'm really excited.

And, along with my career as a counselor, I'm also going to keep writing. It's my dream to publish a couple novels in my lifetime. Also, I would like to be a contributing author for an organization such as Focus on the Family.

In my mind, Christians who are really serious about their faith need to stand up and be leaders in the community. We need to provide advice, guidance and, most importantly, we need to point people back to God. God has given us abilities and talents for a reason. Romans 12:4-8 states it clearly: "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." (NIV)

So, for me, my gift is helping people understand each other. I am a leader in that I can help connect the bridge between people and give guidance for traversing it safely and correctly.

Along with that, I have a few other personal goals. First of all, I want to have my own family. I want to get married and have kids. I am going to plan my life around God and my family, not my work and vocational aspirations. Having grown up in a great family, I have a heart for the support and benefits of having a loving household.

My goals as far as children? Well, a lot of people have a set number ("more than one or two would kill me" or "twenty!"). I don't have a set number, just however many God wants to bless me with is what I want.

So, do I think about the future a lot? You bet I do. It's what I'm striving for. It's what the American dream used to be about - striving for a better future. Now, it seems to be about striving for more money. But I know that true happiness doesn't come from money - it comes from submitting to and obeying God. All of the other things are merely perks. Even if I never make a lot of money or become "blessed" by the world's standards, I will still be doing what I love - helping people, writing, and being involved in my own family. And that, more than anything, gives me joy and hope for my bright future!

My feet reached the edge of the pier. I looked out, forward, to see if I could see anything. But fog was the only thing that my eyes met. I couldn't quite see what lay before me.

But Before that Happens...



*Do not be anxious about anything,
but in everything, by prayer and
petition, with thanksgiving, present
your requests to God*

- Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

I stood there for the longest time, trying to see through the fog, trying to make sense of it all. I heard the water lapping below me. I felt the cold air slapping my face. I heard a seagull somewhere. But I couldn't see...

Okay, so what's gonna happen before I graduate from college? Well, besides the obvious (studying and classes), I've got a couple of ideas in mind.

First of all, I'm going to get really involved. I'm going to help out with the newspaper if I can. Writing, obviously, is of great importance to me. I always jump at the opportunity to write. My friends shake their heads when I get excited about writing essays, when they'd rather take tests. It would be really fun to be a writer, an editor, or anything else for the newspaper. Hey, maybe I should just be the nerd who runs around campus every day holding a stack of papers and shouting "Hear ye!" and "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" On top of that, I would like to be involved with other writers. C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien honed their craft while being involved in the writer's



*Sewing, gluing,
measuring, pressing...
and learning!*

*The making of **Last
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