



The first time I met Mike was at a Rotary club meeting when we put our hats on the credenza at the sign in table several years ago. Both being hat men, we often talked about the hat we wore that day. He offered to take me to a hat place across town, but we never made it. Some weeks later he approached me and said bro Jerrold I have a bible question for you. This continued on and off for about a year. I knew that he was searching and was pleased that he wanted to share with me. Did not really get to know Mike until he and I worked closely together on the Shrimporee. He was always a very considerate person. The next year I worked closely with him during his presidency of the club particularly at the end when I was finalizing his Rotary year history as I was the club's historian. He continued to call me bro Jerrold and often had bible issues to discuss. He was always a gentleman in our relationship. Did not see much of Mike after his presidency until I ran into him at Gulf Coast Medical Center where he showed me a DVD noting possible tumors. Some weeks later he sent me an email requesting that I be his spiritual mentor.

Jerrold. I have the highest regard for you as a Christian brother and prayer warrior. As such I would ask you to consider a role as my spiritual mentor. I sense a need for another Christian brother to guide me in my faith walk, hold me accountable and enjoy sharing about the love of our Lord Jesus in brotherly fellowship. If interested give a call and we can begin this journey together.

I said yes and he invited over to his house to talk. He shared his current health situation and in general about his road to absolute certainty about his faith. One thing that he made clear was his faith in Jesus Christ and that this confirmation had recently come about. At that time he had a stint in his colon which could become detached at any time. As such he had last will and testimonies written should this occur. What I noticed about Mike was the peace that he had about his situation. Not peace from a doctor's care but peace that truly transcended human understanding. This comforted me greatly and was a source of spiritual strength for me. In fact I told him some time later how he was such a blessing to me. This seemed to please him greatly and from then on always would say you're a blessing to me bro Jerrold and I am a blessing to you. In all of our conversations he stated how strong his wife Beth was and how they prayed and discussed the word of God daily. She was surely a spiritual rock for him. He started his cancer treatment and we would meet about each week somewhere for lunch. After a while lunch at the classic café at 11:30 was our regular weekly meeting. Later a third person would meet with us. Always, after a few minutes of talking planes, hiking, and other topics, he would say now let's talk about something important Jesus. Mike went through some tough times with complications which prevented the cancer treatment

and the treatment was terminated to start new treatment for a different cancer condition. Later Mike was not able to go to lunch so I meet with him for lunch at his home. The last time I saw Mike he had 4 small crosses carved so one could comfortably grasped it in ones hand. He wanted me to have one and for me to sign and date the container that held the crosses. Each one was made from exotic wood and I chose Brazilian rosewood. A few days after our lunch I had an accident and was confined to a wheel chair with no load restrictions on the right leg and right arm. I called Mike after a few days in the hospital and told him of my condition. He told me that the new cancer treatment was not effective and that he was terminating all treatment. He noted that God would take care of him. I asked was there perfect peace about his decision and he said yes. Our conversation was interrupted by the hospital staff which wanted to take me away for treatment. A few days later my email was brought to me where I learned of the hospice care. Not being able to visit him, many times a day I would grasp the wooden cross and pray for Mike and Beth. I knew he knew I was praying for him and believed he felt the presence of God even more. I also believed his soul smiled and he knew bro Jerrold was thinking of him. I received word from Beth Thanksgiving Day that God called him home. With great sadness, but with greater joy, I felt a wonderful peace and we both knew that God's grace abounded and was far greater than all and every adversary even those that lead to death. Needless to say I will miss bro Mike and our spiritual jounery. Jerrold Dewease, a brother in Christ.