

## Together Forever

The apostle Paul. Paul was “hard-pressed” to choose between his desire to depart and be with Christ and his clear understanding that God does not bring any of us home until we have completed whatever God has planned for our earthly days. (See Philippians 1:23-24.) Paul had more work to do.

Billy Graham’s wife Ruth preceded him to heaven. As he was waiting to see her again, he wrote a book, “Nearing Home.” In it, he explored the Lord’s will for how we live during the time before us as we’re nearing home.

My husband and I have walked through some hard times these last few years. [varied medical issues] Our Lord has used those times to draw us into an intimacy we’d never thought possible. My heart can hardly bear the joy. Our personal preference - and we’ve chatted about it - is that we die simultaneously and relatively painlessly. It’s likely, though, that one of us will precede the other. The current Covid pandemic has brought into focus the reality of our eventual mortality. We two may have days. We may have decades. We’re fine now, But if my husband leaves for heaven before I join him, after all this growing sweetness, how will I bear his absence? God showed me through a Valentine’s Day card my husband had crafted for me a few years earlier. In large letters on the front of the card were the words ***Together Forever***. Oh my. Together. Forever.

If my love leaves earth first, I can hold onto the solidness of ***Together Forever*** and the certainty that God will be near during the time I must wait. And while I wait, if I must wait, I will leave that card propped up on my dresser.

For Billy and his beloved Ruth, for me and my beloved Steve, for anyone who longs to be one heart with Jesus, awaiting us is the end of tears, loneliness, and pain and the arrival of heavenly gifts like ***Together Forever***. Revelation 21:4-5.

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