

# The Lost Wallet

by Steve & Laura Clark

This morning when I (Steve) read the Thurnaus' inviting message, I said to myself, "yep, I need to get out there and invite, but I'm too busy right now. I'm leaving town tomorrow and have a dozen things I need to get done." I gave it a few seconds thought and then filed it away. The Holy Spirit had other plans.

At 5:00 tonight I went to physical therapy (for my back) and then treated myself to dinner at IHOP before heading back to the office (Laura and the kids are out of town and I had lots more work to do....). I was at the office until about 8:45 pm and then got in the car to head home for some rest. Too late in the evening to invite anybody, right?

Well, on my way home, I checked our voice messages at home, something I rarely, in fact almost never, do. One message - "Hello Steve, this is Malcolm Fallon (sp?). I found your wallet in the IHOP parking lot. Please call me at ....." My heart pounded, my mind raced, a surge of feelings, and a blur of thoughts...I lost my wallet? When? I checked my pocket...not there. I lost my wallet! I've never lost my wallet! My credit cards...I'm getting on a plane tomorrow...what if I didn't have my license??? I better call this guy...now...how blessed am I that the person who found it called...Dialing Malcolm's number...Bewilderment, frustration, curiosity, thankfulness...

"Hello, may I speak with Malcolm?" "He's out walking the dog, can I take a message?" replies the warm voice on the other end, sounding curious as to who is calling at nearly 9 pm. "This is Steve Clark, Malcolm found my wallet. I'm so thankful...he was so kind to call..." "Well" the warm voice replied "actually, I found it. It was sitting right there in the parking lot. We called your number a few times; we were hoping you'd call." "Wow, great! I'm so lucky, so blessed. Thank you. Thank you...can I come get it?" I asked, my voice buoyed by my happiness. "Yes, come on over, we live near IHOP," the warm voice replied, and then she gave me directions. "I'll be right there...what's your name?" The warm voice was Julie, Malcolm's wife.

Two minutes later, I'm at Malcolm and Julie's. The door is open and Julie greets me, welcoming me in. Slightly nervous, but overcome by eagerness and thankfulness, I walk in. The dog licks my hand (I'm not a dog person, for those of you who don't know). Their seven or eight year old daughter laughs, perhaps sensing the non-dog person in me.

"Julie, Malcolm, thank you, thank you. I can't thank you enough, wow am I blessed...I'm going out of town tomorrow. I'd be in real trouble. "Thank you," I ramble, as if I can't say enough. "Well, you're welcome," says Malcolm "and you're lucky. Your number is unlisted, but you had a receipt in your wallet that had your number on it." (Laura gave me that receipt a few weeks ago...I only had it because it was a credit slip from something she'd returned for me.) "Thank you again, I really can't thank you enough. I'm so thankful for you... and for my wife - she gave me that receipt a few weeks ago." "No problem, we're glad to help," replied Malcolm.

I turned towards the door, but Julie then got a sheepish grin. "One question..." in her warm voice "...well, not to be nosy, but we had to look through your wallet to find your number." Another thousand thoughts whirred through my head, just as many feelings raced through me in an instant - what did she find, I'm slightly uneasy here, what did she find? "Well, it's Marriage Encounter...did you do that? I saw the card in your wallet; well actually you had several of them, so I figured you'd done it." Joy, warmth overcame me, rushing through me. The kind of "I can't suppress this huge smile" warmth, it tastes like hot cocoa warming your insides as it goes down. "Yes, we did...and we're still involved, we present, we..." Julie's warm voice cut in "we want to do it." "You want to do it," Malcolm chimed in, half smiling. Undaunted, Julie continued, "You want to do it too..." Malcolm relented, just a little.

I then gave him my "I was real skeptical too, all the guys are" spiel. Julie had this huge, ear to ear smile as I talked. I went on about how it has changed our lives, how we are different people, how great ME is...an impromptu witness talk, on the spot. Julie then volunteered that they have three kids and just haven't found the time to go, "so busy, you know." "I know exactly what you're talking about. We have three kids too. Our babysitter cancelled a week or so before our weekend...fortunately my wife's cousin was able to baby sit," I related. "Here, here's a card...you know, I have a bunch... the next weekend is in April. We'd love to have you, you really should do it!" I exclaimed.

I then proceeded with what has become my closing line: "At the risk of making what will sound like a gross overstatement, I mean a //truly// gross overstatement...." "It was that powerful?" interrupted Julie. "We learned more about ourselves and each other in 48 hours than we did in the prior 11 years we were married. I know that sounds like an overstatement, but it's that good!" Julie beamed, had that "wow!" look in her eyes as she said "I bet it did." "You really should do it...if you have any questions, call me - you know our number!" I said as I turned and left.

The end of this inviting story (a true story, mind you) has yet to be written. Julie is sold, ready to go tomorrow. Malcolm, well, he's not so sure finding my wallet was such a good thing. The Holy Spirit at work! Who ever thought losing your wallet could be such a blessing?

Pray for Julie and Malcolm!!!! Pray that they open their hearts to the Holy Spirit's call! Pray for a truly blessed ending to this - true - story. One more thing: Sam and Liz, if the Fallons sign up, we want to be their prayer couple!

Here's hoping you all lose your wallets tomorrow! Hugs to all!

Steve & Laura