

## Recording the last Tape

Nan Pinkston, in an article entitled *The Last Tape*, appearing in *Guideposts* magazine, tells of serving as a nurse on the chemotherapy ward at a hospital when she encountered a young mother named Rebekah who was a patient.

As Pinkston slipped an IV into Rebekah's arm, the young woman whispered a prayer under her breath. She asked Pinkston for her favorite Bible verse, and Pinkston replied, "Jesus wept." She added that it made her feel closer to Jesus knowing that He understood our sorrows.

Over the next few months, Pinkston and Rebekah grew close as Rebekah endured round after round of chemotherapy. But the chemo wasn't enough to fight the cancer, and one day, the doctor told Rebekah that her case was terminal.

Instead of giving in to the pain and sadness, Rebekah began recording messages for her daughters on cassette tapes. She made a list of all the important milestones in her daughters' lives, like their first day of school or their high-school graduation. And she recorded messages of family stories, motherly advice and encouragement for her daughters to face each of these important events with faith and hope.

And finally, one day she had completed her list. She gave all the tapes to her husband with instructions to give them to their daughters at the appropriate times in their lives when they would need their mother's guidance.



One afternoon, Pinkston got an urgent call from the hospital to come immediately and to bring a blank cassette tape. Rebekah's breathing was labored when Pinkston got to her room. Pinkston set up the cassette recorder and held the microphone close to Rebekah's lips.

Rebekah began her last tape to her daughters with the words, "Ruthie, Hannah, Molly – this is the most important tape. Someday your daddy will bring home a new mommy. Please make her feel special. Show her how to take care of you."

She shared a few more words of advice. Then Rebekah ended the tape with these words: "It's okay to be sad, sweeties. Jesus cried, too. He knows about sadness and will help you to be happy again. Remember, I'll always love you."

Rebekah could face her death with hope because she knew she would see her precious children again. And she was preparing her daughters to grieve at her death with the hope that they would be reunited with her someday in eternal life.

(more)

While death has its sting, we must remember that God is the creator of life. Even before He made the world, God planned eternal life for us through the sacrificial death of His Son, Jesus Christ. That's God's promise. We will grieve over the loss of loved ones, but we don't have to grieve as those who have no hope.

Death is the doorway to eternal life – life with God, life without sorrow or pain. And life reunited with those we love. Through faith in Jesus Christ, you will be with the Lord forever.

The Apostle Paul offered this assurance about life after death:

*According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 NIV).*

– Beecher Hunter