

KEEP THE FORK

There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and was given 3 months to live. As she began getting her things "in order" she called her pastor and asked him to come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she wanted read, and what dress she wanted to be buried in. She also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible in her left hand.

Everything was in order and as the pastor was preparing to leave, the woman suddenly remembered one final request that was very important to her. "Please Pastor, just one more thing, she said excitedly. "Sure, what is it?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important to me, the woman continued....I want to be buried holding a fork in my right hand. The Pastor gazed at the woman, at a loss for words.

"That surprises you, doesn't it?" the woman asked.

The Pastor replied "well to be quite honest, I'm puzzled by the request." The woman explained. "You see, Pastor, in all my years of attending Church socials and potluck dinners, I remember that when the dishes were being cleared after the main course, someone would inevitably lean over to me and say "Keep Your Fork". It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming, like velvety chocolate cake or deep dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance to end the great meal.

The Pastor listened intently and a smile came upon his face.

The woman continued, "so, I just want people to see me there in the casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder.....What's with the folk?than I want you to tell them: "KEEP YOUR FORK"....the best is yet to come.

The Pastor eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the woman good-bye. He knew that this would be one of the last times that he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of HEAVEN than he did. She KNEW and trusted that the best was yet to come.

At the funeral, everyone that walked by the woman's casket saw her wearing a beautiful dress with her favorite Bible held in her left hand and a fork held in her right hand. Over and over, the pastor heard people ask the question, "Why is she holding a fork?" and his smile began to get larger and brighter each time.

During his message, the Pastor told the people about the conversation that he had with the woman shortly before she died. He explained the fork and what it symbolized to her.

The Pastor told everyone how he could not stop thinking about the fork and how he hoped that they would not be able to stop thinking about it either. That fork, and the meaning of it to the woman, had quite the impact on everyone and they are still sharing the story with people they meet.

And now it has been shared with you....so the next time you reach for your fork, let it remind you, oh so gently, that the best is yet to come....