

Something to Pray About

By Cindy Sears – February 2010

"GOD'S MAN"



Though he was the father of my first cousin, Randy's, wife, I did not know Rev. John Cole before coming to Ebenezer UMC. I don't remember what my first impressions of this man were, but the title of this essay tells you how I viewed him after I had known him for just a short time. John Cole was not an impressive-looking man, nor was he an eloquent speaker, but he knew the Bible, God's Word, thoroughly, and he preached and taught the truth that he found in the Bible. I had a feeling that John felt that the writers' of the Bible did a good job of explaining the way of salvation for everyone, and therefore, there was no need for him to embellish the tale with lofty or flowery language. Just read what it said. Repeat what it said. Accept what it said about Christ. The only other step to take was to accept Christ as Savior and live your life under His Lordship. John did throw in some humorous stories and insights, and he was always ready to laugh at himself, as well as other people's foibles—without putting them down.

Being raised a Baptist, I was grateful for John's help in understanding the Methodist way of worship, church government, and religious observance. The class he gave on the Methodist Church was well done and enjoyable. The Wednesday evening Bible studies that he helped lead before he became too weak to continue helped to reground me in biblical truth after having been away from church for a couple of decades. Even though I disagreed with John's take on the "once saved, always saved" debate, he did not rant or rave at me about my position. We simply agreed to disagree and carried on in working for our Lord—partners in service and worship.

John Cole not only preached and taught God's truth he sang it. His singing seemed to come from deep inside of himself. When John sang, his belief in Christ's love and sacrifice for us was most evident. The last time he sang for our church was a sad time for me, but also a joyous moment. I pray, along with Marsha, that the adult choir will grow in spite of his absence. What a tribute that would be to John Cole—to have a full choir every Sunday and not just on the day of his funeral.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for blessing us with the presence of your faithful servant, Rev. John Wesley Cole. He ran the race to the finish, endured to the end, and has received his reward—not only that crown of righteousness reserved for all those who long for Christ's appearance—but now he sees His Savior face to face. Hallelujah!

—Cindy Sears