



Dear Friends of Terry,

To have known Terry Haskins was to have loved him.

He was Chairman of the Young Republicans in Greenville County in the early eighties. I was a young, unelected activist who loved working for conservative candidates. I remember attending a meeting of the Young Republicans in Colonial Court's conference room on Wade Hampton Boulevard. Terry was presiding. I remember thinking; this chairman is a humorous, interesting person.

We quickly became good friends. We had lunch together at least three days a week. Our conversations were usually about mutual friends and politics, but often encompassed religion and activities at his Alma Mata, Bob Jones University. Quite often no words would pass between us. It was enough to share the friendship and to simply know that we were there for each other—best friends.

Even back then, Terry was single-minded. His vision of a political career never wavered. To prepare him for his destiny, he left Bob Jones and went to law school. He then returned as an attorney to pursue his dream.

Had it not been for Terry's help, I would have never been elected to my first office as a City Councilman. Terry worked hard, was valiant, and his word was his bond. Because of these qualities he was held in high esteem and everyone respected his opinion.

Later when Terry ran for a seat on the City Council, I was proud to be his campaign manager. Terry hated going door-to-door. As his rigid taskmaster, I would call him every evening to check on the number of houses he had visited that day. Aside from door-to-door campaigning, he was a consummate campaigner. And, he was a superb City Councilman.

When Fran and I married twenty-one years ago, Terry was the best man at our wedding. He would never miss an opportunity when I introduced him as best man, to respond, "Yeah, I sure am."

It was always one-upmanship when Terry and I were together. I could calculate his response to my sarcastic quips before he made them. Even today when I am listening

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to a radio broadcast or see or read something reported in the news, I will almost audibly say what his quick-wit answer would have been to the story.

When Terry and Gloria named their first child David, I was honored. However, I am not complete owner of the name as Terry had two other friends, one in high school and one in college, named David, so I only have one-third ownership of David Haskins.

Knowing Terry, it is predictable that he has such wonderful, interesting children. They are all snap-sharp and brilliant, just as Terry. His sons were a constant delight and challenge to him. He would often talk about his adventures with the boys. We often contemplated which of them would become politicians.

Terry did not let his circumstances get him down. His strong faith overpowered his emotions. This is a rare quality that is possessed by few. He was constantly making light-hearted comments and telling jokes, even when he had lost his hearing and his days on earth were few.

After a fervent attempt to save Terry's life in Houston, he returned home in worse health than before. During this time he had moments of lucid communication. One night while I was "on watch" in his hospital room, he told me about a dream that he had on his trip back home from Texas that he said was so amazingly vivid. He said that he dreamed that he was flying in an airplane with Carroll Campbell. He said, "David, it was so real. Carroll and I were in the cockpit of that airplane. I felt that I could touch him." Even during this difficult time in his life, he was having political dreams.

Terry absolutely loved all of his friends and they loved him. However, members of the House were special and "number one" on his list of beloved pals. As a lowly State Senator, I sometimes felt left out because I was not a part of the "House Group." His commitment to his House friends led to him being elected Speaker Pro Tempore. With no offense meant to anyone currently in the House, I have no doubt that after Speaker Wilkins' Ambassadorship appointment, Terry would have been elected the new Speaker.

The words of Dr. Bob Jones, III that were spoken at Terry's memorial service would probably best encapsulate Terry's thoughts of life. Dr. Bob said something along these lines: If Terry could come back from the paradise in which he now resides and speak to us today, he would quickly point out that so much of our political and human endeavors are vanity of vanities. This statement was made to an auditorium full of politicians.

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Are our policy decision-making skills and political maneuvering abilities really that significant? I believe Dr. Bob's point as stated above was that only those things that have eternal consequences are really important.

I believe God's plan was for Terry to serve Him through service to others in his legislative capacity. Terry knew that the notoriety and acclaim we acquire in our positions in life have no eternal significance. He had an incisive mind and a discerning spirit. He fully understood that only those things of eternal consequence would last and not burn.

Like the thief on the cross, Terry is with Jesus the Messiah in paradise. To go to paradise and have your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, you must do the one thing commanded in John 3:16. Do this and someday you will not only have the pleasure of meeting my friend, Terry, but you will meet all the apostles, the prophets, and the Messiah himself.

God Bless You,

David L. Thomas
SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE

