

A photograph of a beach with waves crashing onto the shore. The sand is light-colored and has several footprints in it. The text is overlaid on the sand in a white, cursive font.

*Footprints  
the legacy of Kyle Lake*



*On October 31 2005 the following invitation  
was posted on the UBC website*

"The FOOTPRINTS Project is a venture to gather and preserve the memory and legacy of Kyle Lake. If Kyle has touched your life in any way (as a friend, a pastor, or a stranger), PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE take a few minutes to sit down and reflect on the FOOTPRINTS that Kyle has left in your own life and heart and how he has touched and impacted your Journey. Your reflection may surface in the form of a story, a poem, or a scattered stream of thought.

The intention of this project is to provide a sort of time capsule or treasure chest of memories for Kyle's family. As you sit down to write your reflection, ask yourself this question: "What do I want Kyle's children to know about their father? What can I give them to remember his life by?"

Please e-mail all FOOTPRINTS to: [footprintslegacy@hotmail.com](mailto:footprintslegacy@hotmail.com)"

*The following stories or FOOTPRINTS, were gathered  
over the following month in honor of Kyle his family and  
the extraordinary legacy he left behind*

Live. *And Live Well.*

Breathe.

Breathe in and Breathe deeply.  
Be PRESENT. Do not be past.  
Do not be future.

Be now.

On a crystal clear, breezy 70 degree day, roll down the windows and

Feel

the wind against your skin.  
Feel the warmth of the sun.

If you run, then allow those first few breaths on a cool Autumn day to FREEZE your lungs and do not just be alarmed,

be Alive.

Get knee-deep in a novel and

Lose

track of time.

If you bike, pedal

Hard

... and if you crash then crash well.

Feel the

Satisfaction

of a job well done,  
a paper well-written,  
a project thoroughly completed,  
a play well-performed.

If you must wipe the snot from your 3-year old's nose, don't be disgusted if the Kleenex didn't catch it all... because soon he'll be wiping his own.

Grieve.

If you've recently experienced loss, then

And Grieve well.

At the table with friends and family,

Laugh.

If you're eating and laughing at the same time,  
then might as well laugh until you puke.

And if you eat, then

Smell.

The aromas are not impediments to your day. Steak on the grill, coffee beans freshly ground, cookies in the oven.

And Taste.

Taste every ounce of flavor.  
Taste every ounce of friendship.

Taste every ounce of Life.

*Because-it-is-most-definitely-a-Gift.*



Avery, Jude, and Sutton -

i heard someone say a few years back, "You can impress people from a far, but you can impact them up close." your dad made a decision to impact people by living life with others up close.

when i first met your dad we were both baylor students, and even though i was 3 years older (exactly, my birthday is june 12 also) i was so drawn to his enthusiasm for life and for his God.

when he was the interim youth minister at columbus ave baptist in waco, I was the youth minister at first baptist houston. we worked on a mission trip together and your dad came down to houston for a week with several high school students. i was honored to partner with him on that. again, i was so drawn to his enthusiasm for ministry and for people. my dad was the pastor at columbus ave back then, and i remember telling him, "you've got to hire kyle lake as your youth minister, he is incredible." dad called me back a few days later and told me he tried to hire kyle permanently, but even then ( i think your dad was about 22!) your dad felt like his God was calling him to pastor a church.

throughout the years we had opportunity to talk, whether over the phone or in person. being from waco, being in ministry, having a love for baylor, and having many common friends, your dad and i just randomly connected over the years. every time though Avery, Sutton, and Jude - i was drawn to his love for life and for his God.

i was at the funeral yesterday and it was a time of remembering a life well-lived. being a pastor myself now up in the dallas area, i have been to many funerals. but the funeral yesterday was different. there were 2,000 people there who just like me had been drawn to your dad. it was a time of celebration, not sadness. it was a time of hope, not regrets. it was a time to remember why your dad had so much life, it was because he knew Life Himself - Jesus Christ.

i hope to be in the distance somewhere when you enter Heaven yourselves one day, and just watch from behind an angel or a mansion as you get to meet your dad face-to-face. because then Avery, Sutton, and Jude - you will get to spend 10,000 years times 10,000 years with him...it is going to be awesome. until then, love God with everything you have, embrace the beauty of God's creation and His people, and live life to the fullest through Jesus Christ.

*just a brother in Christ who loves your Dad too*

*John Durham*

Kyle was one of the few really real people I knew. There was no pretense to him. He loved deeply and lived his life out of the center, one that was filled with Christ. And yet, he embraced his humanity as well.

I came to Baylor in 1998 and had the honor of meeting him then. He was a source of encouragement, reality, relevance, humor, light, and truth. I know, beyond anything, that he would want you to be true, to be exactly who you are. To struggle, to grow, to fall down, to get up, to dance, to cry, to question, to seek and to be. How? Because he wanted that for his church body, and in so many ways said the same for you.

Avery, he loved you. You were his girl with the strange Jersey accent. He liked playing house with you, dolls with you. He rescued one of your dolls from a garage sale because it had meaning for you two.

Sutton and Jude, my favorite memory is one of him bringing you two up one Sunday to dance to Coldplay (I think he was more into it than you two). He worshiped with you two, as strange as that sounds. You bounced around, he jumped up and down, one of you wandered off...but it was a moment of sheer joy for him, just you, your Dad, and the Father. He spoke with fondness of the little things you did, the moments of frustration. He was your father.

Take his words for your life...love God, in all facets and meanings, embrace beauty, large, small and unrecognized and live life to the fullest in joy, sorrow and moments.

*All my love*

*Ashley Lassiter*

Dear Avery, Sutton and Jude,

You had one awesome daddy! I saw someone who made your mommy laugh so hard she cried. He would always hug your mommy tight and end it with a kiss. Your daddy knew just what your mommy liked- to exercise, go to the beach, go to Ninfas, eat candy! Your daddy made your mommy smile so big it lit up a room. She would walk next to him so proud that he was hers! She got the love of her life. Your daddy left such an awesome legacy in so many ways, but what I saw, was how he made a woman so happy and full of life!

*Amy ( Davenport McFarland*



Kyle impacted so many lives (mine and my wife's included). He truly lived a life worth celebrating. After I heard the news, I hid myself in a coffee shop to reflect and digest -- and this song surfaced...

"Kyle's Song"

[re]Understand the world you know.  
[re]Understand the God who reigns.  
[re]Understand the way you live.

Relate to Him with inward posture;  
Don't rely on outward practice,  
It will only wear you out.

Smell the seasons;  
Taste the rain;

Be the person God wants you to be,  
And the rest will follow.

Feel the Lord always;  
Listen for His voice in all things;  
See divine beauty throughout creation.

There is no place on earth too secular  
For God's presence to be;  
There is no place on earth too sacred  
For sorrow to find root.  
But have faith through them both,  
And the rest will follow.

Don't put God in a box,  
Even a really big one.

\*Traveling mercies, Kyle.  
Thank you for living a life worth celebrating.

*Peace*

*Scott Sutton*

Kyle Lake...

goofy, vivacious and charismatic...

I grew up with Kyle in youth group, then he was my youth intern one summer, then we were at UBC together, then I came to Journey where I met Scott Gornto and had the blessed opportunity to baby-sit Avery while they all went out to eat one night.

To watch Kyle progress from a high-spirited, cool soccer player at Lee to such a caring and devoted father was a gift from God. To see how God can impact and use someone's life to lead other's to a more fulfilling life was a joy.

I remember the night that Kyle and his buddies did a skit at our youth camp, he was older so he was cooler. He dressed up in women's clothes and sang a song... I don't remember, but I am sure I have the picture at home. I will email it when I find it. He was such a nut! Not only did he entertain us with his skits, we would also be entertained with how many "um's" he would use in his talk. As teenagers, we would sit there and count, often times reaching into the hundreds.

I remember the transformation..... the call to be a pastor and how his speaking became wise and eloquent (less "um's") and the devotion he had to be a great daddy. The night that Jen and Kyle entrusted me to baby-sit Avery is a precious night for me. As they left, Avery began to cry and cry b/c her mommy and daddy were leaving. You could see it in Kyle's face that he just wanted to pick her up and tell her that everything was going to be ok. I know his kids will miss those moments with him..... Kyle telling them that everything will be okay. They now have to learn to trust their Father in Heaven through those heartbreaking moments in their lives... I mourn the fact that there will be many of those heartbreaking moments in the lives of his children, Jen's life and in the lives of his church community.

God comfort us all in this tragic, senseless loss.

*Anne Mangefeste*

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Lake,

My heart and prayers go out to your family. As I write this letter, I have known about the accident for about twenty-four hours and am still in a state of disbelief. I realize that Kyle is one of the closest, if not the closest, friends I have known who has passed away and I am having an especially hard time dealing with his death. I cannot even imagine the impact on your family, his wife and children.

It is hard for me to accept that he is gone. I continually break down into tears each time I attempt to talk to Micah or Malia about his death and it will be a long time before I truly accept it.

There is no question that Kyle's absence will be felt among his church for the rest of its existence and everyone associated with the church will forever miss Kyle. Kyle had an important and instrumental impact on University Baptist, just as Kyle impacted my life. Kyle was a positive role model in many peoples' lives and played a big role in directing their lives toward Christ.

Even though I have not seen Kyle in many years or stayed in close contact with him, I feel his absence. Events such as Kyle's death often test my beliefs and make me question why God would allow this to happen. Despite my anger and desire that God should have chosen a different method, different time, and different place for Kyle's passing, I believe that God has a purpose and plan and that even extremely painful events for us are in accordance with God's purpose and plan. I can foresee many people rallying together and many lives being saved because of Kyle's passing and the impact of his life will not be forgotten.

Everyone liked Kyle, including me. I have always admired his willingness and desire to live a life dedicated to Christ and helping others. Kyle had many gifts and talents: he was friendly, intelligent, athletic, handsome, a role model, humble, and considerate. Growing up at First Baptist Church, there were only a few people that I considered really close friends and Kyle was one of those people. I will miss him dearly.

*Sincerely*  
*Jonathan Mitchell*

kyle and i had one really good lunch together when i first started going to ubc in waco, at a chinese restaraunt that in its last incarnation was a nail salon. we both had massive diet cokes and talked about people we knew who went to bethel college...which led to him getting me in touch with the Pagitts, which led to me working for Solomon's Porch, which led to me sitting here today.

kyle, as can be seen in the photos, is very cute. while at baylor, he was in a fraternity which was higher in the social stratosphere than my sorority, and, unfortunately, that crap means something in central texas. so, when i first started attending ubc, i was intimidated by him. then i was covered by his lovely blonde wife, whom i was sure would be terrible, and who turns out to be extremely nice. then, 2 things happened: kyle started calling me "kp" (he was the ONLY one down there to do that), and i heard him singing jay-z's "hard knock life" to himself one day when i was sewing a cover for crowder's couch. Intimidation, gone; friendship, begun.

a couple summers ago i met some heads of christian publishing houses at a conference and was pursuing some leads. i knew that kyle had recently been pursued to write, so we emailed for a couple days about the truth of those publishers. it was more than 5 years after my college graduation, and not only did he remember me, he called me KP. he was funny, and truthful, and encouraging. what more can you ask?

very rarely are there people in one's life who change your whole direction. kyle did that for me. i wish i could be there.

*Kathryn Prill*

My name is Brenda McCullough I am the Youth Sec. at First Baptist Amarillo, TX. I cannot begin nor even find the words that express the feelings our ministry has during this time. Kyle was our camp pastor this past summer in Calif. Many connections were made with Kyle by both our youth and our adult sponsors during camp. Kyle not only shared God's word, he loved us completely and in turn we loved him. Love was our camp topic.

The loss of Kyle is not a UBC or even a Waco loss--it is so much bigger than that. We grieve deeply with you and we also want to celebrate fully his life as well as his impact on the world. You are all in my prayers.

*In His hands  
Brenda (BB Jo)*

It was one of my favorite sermons that Kyle ever gave. He brought out the boys at the beginning to dance to Coldplay with him on stage....it was so precious. We all clapped along, and they danced some more, all three of them with HUGE smiles on their faces. I couldn't see Jennifer from where I was, but I'm sure she had the same smile as well. Then, he began to correlate how his relationship with the boys parallels with our relationship with God. He started talking about how when the boys were that young they had no choice but to depend on him, because they needed him for everything, and he hoped that they still chose to come to him when they got older and didn't "need" him to do everything for them. God is the same way, he said. That we depend on Him through it all right at the beginning, and then we think we can handle it once we've been at it for a while. I don't think the full impact of that hit me until I sat down to type this. Kyle had a way of making you look at something in a different way. The angle that no one else has approached before, but also an angle that makes a lot of sense. His innovative ideas have helped me and my walk with God, and I know that he has helped many others.

*Tia Bryan*

For those of you that don't know what a man-crush is, let me explain. A man-crush is when a guy runs across another guy and he thinks to himself, "If I could be like anyone in the world, I would be like him." (If you are a girl, then just use the same equation with the appropriate pronoun.) For many guys, their man-crush is someone famous that everyone in the free world would recognize. People like Michael Jordan, Bono, Tiger Woods, Bill Gates or others might come to mind for the general population. And why not, since these people have everything that our human minds could only dream of having, such as countless fame, power, money and friends? But not me; when someone asks me who my man-crush is, mine is easy, it is Kyle Lake. I have talked about Kyle for years, but it was not until Kimberly and I started working with our church youth that I realized the depth of his impact on me. We had a discussion in our first year with the kids, and as an ice-breaker, the lesson had us ask the kids to think about someone they knew that defined Christianity for them. I had mine in one second flat, and it evolved into a man-crush discussion and revelation all at once. If you know Kyle Lake, then you clearly understand. For those that do not know him, then I am sorry that you were never blessed by knowing Kyle. And I do mean blessed, because he is truly a soldier and a shepherd of God's. Every year, I tell our youth and anyone else who will listen about Kyle Lake and how much of an impact he had on me. In so many words, this is what I tell them.

I met Kyle the Fall semester of 1991 at Baylor University. I went to Baylor not knowing what to expect. Here I was, a Mexican Catholic with a modest economic upbringing going to the world's largest Baptist university. Like many private universities, it is fair to say that there is not a great deal of socio-economic diversity, and I will just leave it at that. So I felt like the quickest way to meet people was to do something I had done all my life, play soccer. So there we were, thirty to forty college guys all gathered in the hot Texas summer in late August to knock the ball around for two-a-

days and try out for Baylor's team. Then enters Kyle. Kyle could stand out in any crowd and somehow or another, we started talking. Kyle and I entered into small talk about where each other was from. It turned out that we played against each other in the soccer state championship our senior year so we had this interesting bond. I would not dare to say rivalry because he was a far superior player than I. There were a lot of really solid players out there, but to me, Kyle stood out over everyone else to me. It was not only his play, but his overall demeanor. He seemed to be floating. He was always wearing a smile and cross earring while dribbling around everyone. Like I have told many people, it was not because he was such a great soccer player that I was drawn to him, but because he was such a good person. Kyle had this presence that just made you want to be better, not just in soccer, but in everything. A lot of people proclaim to be Christian, but their actions tell a different story. Not Kyle, Kyle lived his faith, and I have never seen anyone like him and I never will.

You see, Kyle had every reason to act like a Prima Dona or the "big man on campus" or lay down a righteous attitude. He had everything that most people can't imagine one person possessing. He was extremely friendly, easy to talk to, had model-good looks and a great sense of humor. He had a great family (it seemed like his parents and sister were at most of our games), he was a super athlete, sharp-witted to boot and had a very clear understanding of faith. None of these gifts can be understated. For example, when I say he was friendly, anyone could walk up to him and he would talk to them about anything they wanted to talk about. When I say he had model-good looks, you could take him and drop him on the cover of GQ, People, Sports Illustrated, Men's Health, etc and think to yourself, "Wow, it has to be fun being him." When I say that he had a great sense of humor, he was a constant joker that always was giving a laugh or looking for a laugh and he wore a smile that never went away. I hope you are getting the picture, he had all of these gifts and more in abundance with faith at the center of it all. I am confident that Kyle would have been wildly successful in anything he wanted to do in life, it was just fortunate for us and God that it was the ministry that called him. Most people would find it easy to abuse all of these gifts if they had them, but Kyle used them graciously.

You can learn a lot about a person and their faith on a playing field. I never heard him yell at someone for making a mistake while playing. I never heard him badmouth a teammate or anyone at all. As a matter of fact, I never heard one negative comment come out of his mouth. I never saw him in a down mood, on or off the field. He was always lifting and picking people up. He was humble and unselfish in his play. He did not demand the ball or pout when he did not get it, but quite honestly that was not a problem, because it would be fair to say that we all preferred that he had the ball anyway. He was one of the first at practice and one of the last to leave practice. You have to remember, we were playing soccer in college, and there were some that did their fair share of drinking, smoking and swearing. Kyle was not quick to judge or act indifferently to those that were not like him. Off the field, when you would see him around campus, he was always smiling. It did not matter whether you were one of his closest friends or a mere acquaintance, you were going to get the same person. He was a playa', not a hater, he was real, not a pretender, he was Mr. Consistent. During our time together over the years playing soccer and running into each other around campus, Kyle kept affirming my first impressions with every interaction I had and it amazed me.

So as I sit here with a heavy heart, if you have a man-crush, I would be remiss if I did not tell you to tell them that you have claimed them as your man-crush. My biggest regret in life is never taking the time to tell Kyle how much of an impact he had on me. I thought that I would have time to tell Kyle personally. I kept telling myself that I needed to call or e-mail him with my revelation, but it was something that I wanted to do in person. I let life get in the way, and I made excuses by telling myself that I would have plenty of time to take a day off and drive down to Waco for lunch or a coffee and lay all of this on him. I let family, work and traveling for work serve as my reason, so I kept putting it off. I had heard updates from mutual friends about Kyle and all the great things



Jeffrey Kyle Lake was special.

He was different and for those who were fortunate enough to be close to him, they knew this. I love Kyle. I miss my brother and one of my best friends. I was blessed to have been close to him for 33 years. It pains me to live life without a friend that brought me so much joy in living life.

For years we teased Kyle that he was adopted. He was so different with his sandy blonde hair and calming blue eyes. He was a sparkling and radiant person, and he lived life with

such joy and abundance which could only be traced to his faith. Kyle was never adopted by my parents. We are full blooded brothers and friends. No, Kyle was on loan to us for 33 years and I thank God for that time together, but I wish I had more.

We played soccer together. My senior year in High School, Kyle made the varsity team as a sophomore. During one practice, coach selected me as one of 6 captains for a 5 on 5 drill. My first selection was Kyle. Many of the other guys on the team made fun of us for my selection of Kyle. I next chose Joel "Bubba" Smith. We fared very well during the drill. The truth was that I knew Kyle was good, very good. We played soccer together since the time I turned 5. I miss playing soccer with my friend, Kyle.

A few years ago, Kyle and I were able to go on a turkey hunt together. One beautiful spring morning, we sat under a cedar tree decked out in our camouflage while calling in a gobbler. Within a matter of minutes, a beautiful gobbler, fanned up and drumming, came in close to us. Two other birds were with the gobbler. The birds came within a few feet of us. Neither one of us took a shot at the birds. We embraced the beauty and serenity of the moment and enjoyed our

hunt together. I will miss hunting with my brother, Kyle.

My senior year at Baylor I lived with both of my brothers, Jona and Kyle at the Centre close to campus. Knowing that I had been jumping around from church to church, Kyle approached me and informed me that he was going to join First Baptist Church of Waco. The following Sunday we both walked the aisle together to join the First Baptist Church of Waco. Kyle would later graduate from Truett Seminary in the same sanctuary in Truett's first graduating class. Later on, his funeral was held in the same sanctuary. I will miss walking the aisle's with Kyle, but I know he will be waiting to greet me one day at the end of life's aisle. I look forward to that day.

Today is a different day. It's quieter today than it was when Kyle was with us. I wish Kyle were here to visit with over a cup of coffee. I would love to send him a funny text message and receive one back from him. Extraordinarily gifted, Kyle could make anyone laugh and I mean anyone. He was also a talented writer, as well as speaker. He was such a good brother, friend, counselor and pastor. Although I believe he is in our presence and I will someday see Kyle again, I

miss him. In the days, weeks, and months ahead I thank you for your continued prayers over Jenn, Avery, Jude and Sutton and our family. Through God's grace and goodness, one day soon, we will all be together. God bless.



*Jody Lake*

Kyle Lake, I never thanked you for your impact on my life. So here goes (in no particular order). Thank you for:

1. Being an example of abundant life in Christ to a soon-to-be-high-schooler (15 years ago) at a youth camp in Arkansas. I got saved at that camp and your presence there was a big part of it, not because you shared the "Roman Road" or "Plan of Salvation" with me, but because you LIVED a life that reflected Christ.
2. For spending many of your college summers coming home to Tyler and leading the youth at FBC. You disciplined many of us, without that I may have never grown past my salvation experience.
3. Your sense of humor. Even though it was usually inappropriate on so many levels.
4. Having an ear to listen when I found out I was going to be a father.
5. Welcoming Lori, Reagan and myself to Waco shortly after you became pastor at UBC. You and Jen were so kind and helpful to us. You helped us find a place to live and plugged us in to your lives in Waco. We had a great time while we were living in Waco. I have missed the movies, dinners, watching you play soccer with my son, Jen's pancakes at your house...
6. Being my friend. I definitely got the better end of that friendship.
7. For sharing hunting stories. Yours have always been better than mine and you usually had pictures to back them up.
8. Staying true to your calling.
9. Loving your wife, kids, parents, brothers, sister, nieces, nephews and so many others. I always admired the depth of your relationships with those closest to you.
10. Introducing me to real Christian music. So much of what I listen to today is because you introduced me to it 10+ years ago.
11. Being real in your walk. You didn't approach it as a seminary grad and church pastor that had all of the answers. You approached it as a man that was in love with his Creator - Savior who was continuing his pursuit of a closer relationship with Him.
12. Your humility. You were the best in so many areas of life, yet you never acted like you were bigger or better than anyone else.
13. Preaching the True message of Christ not only through your words but through your life. You showed me and some many that Jesus wasn't to be confined to 3 hours on Sunday, quiet times, and maybe Wednesday night. You showed us that we can relate with Christ all day and everyday.
14. Not being afraid to give a hug to another man.
15. Writing a couple of books that have been so refreshing to my walk with the Lord. I hate that I never picked up the phone to tell you what a wonderful job that you did on them.
16. Introducing me to Zephaniah 3:17. Until then I had no idea that God loved us so much that it makes Him dance.
17. The way you lived life to its fullest.

Kyle you had such a tremendous impact on my life. I am forever thankful that the Lord used you (and others) to bring me to Jesus. My friend, you are missed tremendously. I look forward to a hug when I reach Eternity.

*Dusty Traylor*

I remember being 19 and in my first year at Baylor. My parents had divorced the year before and all I had at the time was my girlfriend. Two weeks later we broke up and I thought my life was over. Not only had I lost my girlfriend but I had no parental unit to turn to for comfort. And even more devastating was that I had distanced myself from Christ and I felt all alone. A week later I decided to go to UBC. I don't know why, but I felt like I needed to get out of the house. It was during that hour long service that God, through Kyle and the band, revealed Himself to me. And not just once but every minute of that hour. I could not even control the tears throughout the service. After that day I called and asked to meet with Kyle. He was 9 years older than me but I remember seeing him at First Baptist in Tyler and watching him play soccer for REL. I figured that it would take a few weeks for him to meet with me but to my surprise he asked if we could meet that day. We went to Common Grounds and had a drink and Kyle just listened to everything that I had on my heart. I told him of all my problems, my sins and my lack of a relationship with God. Over those few hours Kyle explained to me that since God was perfect I did not have to be. He gave me some great advice and even invited me out to play soccer with a few of his friends. WOW, what a guy, he has only known me for a few hours and he is already inviting me out to play soccer.

My point in this story is to illustrate what an unselfish person Kyle was. You see, I have lost several close friends and family members in the last five years since I met Kyle, and on October 30 I felt like I had just lost another. I was praying the other night about this and asking God why this hurt so much. It obviously hurts when you lose a fellow Christian but this pain was like losing a very close family member. God opened my heart and I realized why this hurt so much. It was because Kyle had spiritually touched my life in a way that no other person ever has. And I truly believe that created a bond that is stronger than blood. It is a bond that is beyond earthly connections. I just hope you guys realize that Kyle changed my life and I am going to continue to honor him by living my life the way he preached. You will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

*In God we trust*

*Aaron Duncan*

Kyle was my youth pastor for six months during my sophomore year of high school. That has been almost ten years ago now but I have vivid memories of our time with Kyle. One memory that keeps coming to my mind is Kyle playing the song "What If I Stumble" by DC Talk. I can remember him talking through the song and what it meant to him. What lingers in my mind today is Kyle's revelation of the Grace of God even then. I read his last sermon today and saw the same presence of grace in his words as well as a desire to live life fully, holding nothing back. His life and the testimony of those who witnessed it encourages me to give all of myself to every day and every person. When I was 16, but even more now that I am 25, his life makes me want to look for beauty today and love my family with all of my heart. More than anything though, his life is a loud cry of a wholehearted pursuit of the Jesus who Kyle is seeing face to face.

*Adrianna Bell Walker*

I was on the Christian forum, and I discovered a message forum about what happened.

I was just now listening to the MP3 of the funeral and the garden state sermon and the things that Kyle wrote and it was so wonderful to worship with you singing "come thou fount of every blessing" and listening to the Garden State sermon.

I've been really enclosed in sin and it was good to listen to you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

i believe the Lord can save me a sinner.

*bartek*

I just read the news and the article on Pastor Kyle on the Christianity Today Magazine. You must be wondering what a guy in Bangalore, India has to do with tributes to Pastor Kyle. Sure, I don't even know what he looks like, never heard him or of him. But – it all seemed so tragic when I read the news and I noticed how exposed I felt – I had no answers.

Since I'm an ardent defender of the Christian worldview – I was certain, when the time comes and the situation demands it – I could somehow combine logical thought and scripture verses and explain virtually anything. But today I feel humbled – because this wasn't "martyrdom", this wasn't "disease", it wasn't even "carelessness" – it was an "accident" of the least probable and unexpected type.

As I sat bewildered, I also noticed some words written by Kyle himself: "If you've recently experienced loss, then GRIEVE. And grieve well". It's almost like he spoke to me from his grave – here I am mocking God's eternal patience by a life under-lived and valued. Here I am presuming all of God's wisdom and grace is available as I will it. Here I am careless, expecting God to use me, even without my fullest commitment to Him.

I thought I was a good guy. But Kyle comes across as better. His life – rather his death has revealed the injustice of heart. I need to honor God, love Him wholly, rejoice in everyday He's fashioned for me to stay humbled, recognizing this world is bigger than me, death is larger than me – yet Christ has conquered all for me.

Thank you dear Kyle – the sure sign of a life well lived is how it speaks to those left behind and Kyle's touched me from miles away.



i wanted to send my prayers, love and support to the ubc community. kyle was a blessing and light to all those he encountered. i wrote a short message but know it cannot begin to describe and entail the man he was. thanks to his family and friends for sharing him with me...

kyle... indescribable ... but I will try. I will start by telling my first encounter... or true encounter with him. It was the beginning of this past summer (2005). For as far back as I can remember I have worked or been at camp during the summer, but this summer I was coming home to take organic chemistry at Baylor and my anticipation for summertime was at an unusual low. Waco in the summer, as you may grow to learn, is pretty much the epitome of summer boredom; but don't get me wrong, I love it, of course under the presumption that I find ways to entertain myself. I started playing soccer and ultimate frisbee with ubc and this is where I met your dad, kyle. he is hilarious. I was laughing from the moment I got out there to play—and trust me, soccer is not my forte; but one thing I knew was that I wanted to be on his team. He was the most encouraging man. He made everyone feel involved and special. You know that kind of person who you want to simply be around, well that was him. He was the professor that you would work forever on your paper for because you respected him so much.

He was the coach that you didn't want to mess up because you didn't want to let him down. He was the coach that if you did mess up you knew that he would build you up and would not stop trusting you. He was the person who every time you were with, laughter and a smile accompanied. I wanted to share him with everyone. I wanted my brother to come play so he could meet him. It is not surprising how analogous it was to how I feel when I think about Christ. He was REAL. It was so refreshing to hear him speak because it was so truthful, honest, trustworthy, loving, joyful, and funny. Everything he said I felt was credible because I knew he had done his research. I remember one Sunday he was reading us a psalm, and then he went back to 2 Samuel to show us the background, david's reasoning, his feelings at the time which prompted the writing of this particular

psalm and all I could think of was, "thank you, Father, for kyle". I have a problem with being a little critical of just random facts, and I'm always concerned with context.

I don't believe just anything, but with kyle it was different. Not to say I wasn't equally as critical but he showed where he derived his ideas, the different translations, the authors frame of mind, the history. I loved what he had to say because I knew he would not believe something, teach something, that he himself had not been convinced of. His passion embraced every word. I remember reading his book the day I got it, laughing out loud in the bookstore and developing a greater love for God through those words. When I finished I wanted everyone to read it, and started passing it around. He has a way with words and I am so thankful he wrote those books because no one can articulate and describe God's love; God's will the way he does.

The most amazing part of this father, this family man, is that I didn't even know him that well. I played a few soccer games with him and went to a few services. But his impact this past summer... infinite. I cannot imagine the number of lives he has touched if such a tiny glimpse of him could touch me in such a strong and humbling way. He put perspective in my eyes that summer and will continue to do so. When I thought about going home I was excited about church, about hearing him, about being in the presence and community which he helped to build in God. If nothing else, to me, a mere glimpse in the presence of his life, revealed rare wonders of God, of love, and of truth, which can be so lost in this world. His simple presence and every word was a blessing, thank you for sharing him with me.

*peace and joy doran bostwick*

It's totally strange that I'm e-mailing about Kyle because he is a total stranger to me. I only know him from reading his first book and hearing his sermons on the church web page. Even though he is a total stranger to me, his words in his book, Understanding God's Will, really made a difference to me. He made me realize that there's a world outside of formulas and getting all of the religious aspects down. Kyle loved God with all of his heart and I could see that without even meeting him. When I heard about how he danced with his boys to a Coldplay song during a church service, I knew that there was this part of him that saw following God as a love relationship and not about religion. My heart goes out to UBC Waco, the Lake family, and those who have been touched by Kyle. Thank you for giving us all the opportunity to share what Kyle has done for our lives as a friend, a mentor, a pastor, or even a total stranger.

*God Bless*

*Aaron Bushnell*

i received a phone call on Monday, October 31 at 7:30 am hearing that Kyle lake had died.  
i couldn't believe it.

it was not even a month before that i sat in front of him, watching and listening to him at his lab at the catalyst 05 conference. i listened to him speak on breaking down barriers and not trying to imply formulas to the will of GOD.

i got the chance to speak to him for 15 minutes there after.  
though my relationship with Kyle was only that, it is lasting.

he told me to keep with my dream, to follow God, to seek the Spirit of God.

Kyle was not a man after his own good...he was a man after GOD.

i thank God for that 15 minute interaction with Kyle, that only God will use for a lifetime.

*in HIS arms*

*josh hall*

memphis,tn

I was a Baylor undergraduate from 1996 - 2000 and a graduate student there from 2000-2002. I sporadically attended UBC as an undergraduate, but my commitment to being involved in a church family was not strong. Things changed when I started graduate school and most of my friends graduated and moved on. I found myself adrift and desired a community of people to belong to.

In 2000 I started regularly attending UBC, as it was the only church in Waco I was familiar with, and was thrilled to find there so much of that which was lacking in my spiritual life. Every week Pastor Kyle would preach on the importance of owning your faith in Jesus, not just blindly doing whatever it was your parents or friends are doing. He explained how a relationship with Jesus is relevant in our daily lives. And UBC demonstrated how Christian community is meant to be

lived out: in authentic fellowship with one another while sharing food, fun, and serious discussion. Through Kyle's words and the friendship of the church, Jesus showed me how exciting and profoundly wonderful it is to follow Him and to be an active member in His church. Those two years of spiritual growth at UBC were profoundly amazing in shaping the person that I am today. It breaks my heart to hear of Pastor Kyle's tragic accident and the wake of sadness and confusion it leaves behind. I'm encouraged, though, because I know Kyle preached Jesus to his family, friends, and congregation and that despite his loss, Kyle's legacy has left all those people in Jesus' hands. There is no better place to be in this time of sadness. I pray God provides comfort and support for the current UBC community, and in particular for Kyle's wife and children. I hope the day comes when their thoughts of Kyle bring only joy and thankfulness for having known him.

*Ted Cook*

I led a retreat in Richmond, VA with Kyle in January 2005. Within minutes of meeting, it seemed like we had been friends forever. At the time I was just starting to look into seminaries around the country, and Kyle talked to me about Truett and what he had experienced there. I was in awe of how Kyle put his faith together with compassion and didn't get caught up in the politics of religion but instead focused on God. That came through in all of our conversations that weekend.

Saturday afternoon of that weekend, we found out that the retreat would be ending early because of a snow storm heading towards Richmond. The coming snow storm also meant that the speaker for the campus ministry group at my college wouldn't be able to make it for our meeting that weekend, so I decided that I was going to share with that group what Kyle had spoken on during the weekend retreat (the topic was "re:vangelism", Kyle's sermon series at UBC a few weeks ago). On his way out the door Saturday afternoon, heading up to Maryland to escape the blizzard, Kyle handed me his notes and said, "These might help you."

If Kyle touched my life that much in a few hours from a snow-shortened retreat, I can't imagine the impact he has had on lives at UBC through the years. I hope Kyle's legacy will continue in the lives of everyone he met, and that every life he touched will continue to be focused on God.

*-Aaron Lee*

Kyle and Jen are both pieces of the treasured memories I have during my time living in Waco. My husband and I were, at the time, part of a young married couples' group with them in the late 90s. The group was the source of so much happiness and laughter! I was awed by Kyle's godly spirit and continuous searching for God's will and spiritual direction. Their love and admiration for each other was evident in everything that I witnessed.

He truly did leave footprints on my life and my spiritual journey. I pray for Jen daily and am thankful and honored for the small time I spent in the presence of such a man.

*Bethany Payne (previously Perry)*

My name is Molly Bain. I am a freshman at Baylor. The first Sunday I was here, I went to UBC. I knew immediately this was the church for me. I soaked in every word Kyle said, and was able to really apply it my life.

He was so full of energy. He brought humor to the service. He told amazing stories. His insight to the Word and then relaying it to us was a gift. He loved what he did, and that was evident. He was sincere in every single thing he did.

Never once was he speaking to us half-hearted. He poured his life into UBC, and that is evident by the amount of lives he has touched.

Words cannot express how much we will miss him.

*Molly Bain*

I don't even know how to begin to write about a man who means so much to so many. Calling Kyle just "my pastor" or even just "my friend" feels incredibly insufficient. Kyle was someone who seemed to fuel the lives around him; making people feel life and live it around him full of laughter, goodness, love, and beauty. I love Kyle, and his impact on my life will be forever evident, be it in my accidental use of the word "beautiful" in response to everything, or in a learned affinity toward sneaking up on people and poking them in slightly uncomfortable ways. Kyle became, for me, a magnifying glass through which the good things in this world became bigger and clearer for everyone who looked at him.

That being said, I can't think of Kyle without thinking of some of the greatest stories I got to share with him and others.

On Impromptu Hunting with Kyle Lake, a shotgun, and Extremely Nice Pants

I come from the city. I am one who was rarely, if ever, afforded the opportunity to hunt anything that couldn't be killed with a BB gun, and which didn't reside in my back yard. However, I have experienced the thrill of the hunt... albeit in one of the most ridiculous scenarios ever.

Every so often, Kyle invites the rest of the leadership team to come out to the family ranch and enjoy some time away to plan, eat, and do a ridiculous amount of hot-tubbing. These leadership team trips to the ranch do not usually include game-hunting of any kind.

However, on this occasion Kyle saw fit to pursue the possibility of an impromptu hunt. As soon as we arrived at the ranch, in the afternoon, I remember Kyle getting that wild look in his eyes, like he's struck gold and can't wait to get it excavated and into safekeeping. With his hands casually stuck into the pockets of his Diesel jeans (which I might add, fit him so well) he sidled up to myself and Harris Bechtol and spoke in a sarcastically secretive whisper, "Hey guys, come with me."

Harris and I met Kyle in the garage, where he stood clothed in his highly stylish Diesel clothing, with a rifle slung over his shoulder. I'll admit, it was a slightly startling sight, and I wasn't sure what this all meant. (Note: This was not the first experience I had with Kyle and the unsuspected appearance of his gun. Once I met him at a Shipley's Donuts, and he had to unexplainably stow his rifle in my car before we got donuts. I didn't ask questions, but was extremely confused.)

Kyle's first notion was that we must get Ben Dudley to come along as well, the last male present at this leadership retreat, who is so much disturbed by guns that he would not knowingly be anywhere around one. Kyle had a plan: we would hide the gun in Harris' car, and somewhere during our casual drive find an opportunity for a hunt. Unfortunately, this plan failed, Ben intercepted us right as we were going to the car and turned down Kyle's grinning offer for an impromptu hunt.

We continued on. Harris drove his Land Rover with shorts, sandals, and a bright green shirt on, Kyle sat shotgun with a shotgun, in the nicest pair of jeans I've seen to this day, with a form-fitting shirt and effortlessly styled hair. I sat in the middle of the back seat, my ghetto tennis shoes on, and

jeans and a t-shirt. If anyone were to meet us at that moment, they would have found us to be unprepared for a number of things; hunting listed among them.

After a short drive, we crept out of the vehicle, and trekked to the feeders; Kyle carefully sounding his turkey call, and Harris and I stumbling behind him. After a lot of walking and listening for turkeys (and Kyle looking back at us with ample amounts of grinning and some sort of silent, full body giggling I had never seen before) Kyle spotted our mark: a whole slew of wild hogs about 200 yards away.

Immediately Kyle began trying to get Harris or I to man the gun for the first shot, as any good mentor or pastor would. We both explained our way out of the shot, feeling our manhoods cheap. In order to get the shot, we spent about 30 more minutes sneaking around the ranch's difficult terrain as it got dark.

As we finally began approaching where we determined these hogs to be, Kyle casually turned around and said, "Oh yah, now if they charge us, you guys just pull yourself up into the tree and they can't get you." At this statement he grinned and winked, and Harris and I looked frantically for the nearest tree that could sustain life. Being not as swift of foot as either Kyle or Harris, I called the nearest tree immediately as my tree in the event of a hog attack.

Almost immediately the angry warning grunts of a hog sounded about 30 yards away from where we were standing. Kyle turned and looked at us with his eyebrows raised and his adolescent "oooooh" face. Harris and I grabbed trees. Kyle dropped down to a knee like a plastic army man. We saw the hog. He aimed, and as it walked: POP! He shot! The hog literally jumped when he was hit and squealed the most stereotypical hog noise I have ever heard. The hog ran around trying to find us as we scattered to trees and Kyle giggled furiously yelling; "We got him! We nailed him!"

After a brief debate about whether or not we should drag it back to the porch where all the others were sitting, we left the hog and headed back. I had been hunting. My manhood was validated. I had been hunting with my meticulously dressed pastor. In a Land Rover. On a church leadership team gathering. Only Kyle Lake would have that kind of vision.

*Matt Singleton*

I will remember Kyle in several ways, one of which is in the back corner of Common Grounds. Every morning I could depend on him being there in that back corner reading his Bible and studying as I came in for my coffee. Every morning, a little sanctuary in a coffee shop. In addition to the sermon given on Sunday morning, his steady presence there served as a testament to his character. Though he didn't know it, his consistency challenged my own. And I am better for it.

I graduated from Baylor University in May 2005, and while a student there, I was also a member of Kappa Sigma. Now the Kappa Sigma chapter at Baylor has an interesting history that begins with Kyle's pledge class. What he and his brothers began continues over a decade later. His legacy to our brotherhood is of a firm foundation upon which is built hundreds of relationships. For this, I owe Kyle Lake a great deal. May his legacy and ministry live on in the footsteps of the thousands whom he touched.

*Keith Frazee*

Kyle taught me more about God in this short time than I have learned in my entire life. He showed me how to love God and he showed me how to accept God's love. There are no words to describe my appreciation for that. Every step in my life has been affected by him and I mean that literally. By teaching me how to follow Christ, my life has changed, my heart has been turned towards God and I will never be the same. I can only pray that I will have a fraction of the impact on the world as Kyle did. I loved him a great deal and I thank him for what he has taught me- a faith that I can understand and follow everyday for the rest of my life.

*Abby Williams*

To Jen, Scott, Avery, Sutton and Jude,

My heart is hurting so much right now for the grief you must be feeling over the loss of Kyle. I want you to know how great of an impact Kyle had on my life, and I know many others. When I think about my experience at Baylor I know I would not have been the same without UBC and Kyle. Going to church there was the first time I realized how loving, creative, fun and life-changing God can be. Kyle and the leaders of UBC knew how to have fun and find joy in the Lord as well as having a sincere relationship with Him. Going to church there every Sunday was a delight for me because not only did I feel closer to God by what Kyle was teaching, I had a great time. You could see in Kyle's eyes how he felt. He loved the people of UBC and had a passion for God that I have not found in many people. His devious smile let you know that he was up to something, but that he had a heart of gold. It was so refreshing to get to know this fun loving guy that was so serious about the Lord. I wanted that passion as well, and I soon fell in love UBC. Over the next few years that I spent in Waco, I was able to see how much Kyle challenged and impacted so many of the students from Baylor. He had a gift of reaching out to people and connecting with them on a meaningful level.

After I left Waco and moved to Dallas, Kyle recommended to Jonathan and I a church that his brother in law was pastoring called Journey. My faith continued to grow and I felt like a part of a family at that church. Kyle was such a strong influence in the development of my faith and seeking after God sincerely. I want you to know that he will be missed and always remembered in love.

*My deepest sympathy*

*Stephanie Ridenour*

I didn't know Kyle, but had read his book "Understanding God's Will" as I had heard and read that it wasn't your average "pray and God will let you know, and if He doesn't your not doing something right" type of book. I felt like I had made a new friend after reading this book in much the same way I felt after reading books by Brennan Manning, Henri Nouwen, Mike Yaconelli, Philip Yancey, etc. Like these authors, Kyle's heart and personality leaped off every page. He didn't try to sugarcoat himself because he was a successful pastor and published author, but he included himself in this boat, on this journey, just like everyone else. I could tell he had a passion for helping people along in this journey, for making people think outside the box, and for inspiring people to love God with their lives and that this doesn't have to be stressful and mundane because you have to, but joyful and alive because you want to. He never once came across as condescending or preachy (rare, considering his vocation was a pastor/preacher), but just as a regular guy trying to help and inspire others. I was saddened and shocked when I heard the news of his death, to my surprise more than I thought I would be because I had never met Kyle. It was then I realized that I felt like I got to know some of his heart through his writing, and I liked what I got to know. I was also touched by the stories I've read of the affect Kyle had on other people's lives as well, especially of those who were close to him or knew him on some level. I cannot imagine what his wife and kids are going through, but they should be assured that his legacy will live on in the hearts of those lives he touched. Thanks, Kyle.

*Sincerely*

*Richard (Lexington KY)*

I just had this song on my heart by Andrew Peterson. It is on his CD titled The Far Country. The song is called "More." I truly feel the pain the family feels and am working on a song I started around Midnight last night after I heard about what happened from a friend. I just couldn't sleep. I'll send it on when I get it finished. For now here are the Andy Peterson lyrics to "More"

*William Livingston*

"More" by Andrew Peterson and Pierce Pettis (John 12:24)

This is not the end here at this grave  
This is just a hole that someone made  
Every hole was made to fill  
And every heart can feel it still--  
Our nature hates a vacuum  
This is not the hardest part of all  
This is just the seed that has to fall  
All our lives we till the ground  
Until we lay our sorrows down  
And watch the sky for rain  
There is more  
More than all this pain  
More than all the falling down  
And the getting up again  
There is more  
More than we can see  
From our tiny vantage point  
In this vast eternity  
There is more

A thing resounds when it rings true  
Ringing all the bells inside of you  
Like a golden sky on a summer eve  
Your heart is tugging at your sleeve  
And you cannot say why  
There must be more  
There is more  
More than we can stand  
Standing in the glory  
Of a love that never ends  
There is more  
More than we can guess  
More and more, forever more  
And not a second less  
There is more than what the naked eye can see  
Clothing all our days with mystery  
Watching over everything  
Wilder than our wildest dreams  
Could ever dream to be  
There is more

I did not know Kyle personally, and he did not know me. I saw him speak at the Catalyst conference a month ago, and this is all so surreal. What I do know is that his faith is strong, his testimony incredible and his love for his family is real. In the hour that I got to hear Kyle speak, he spoke of his family, his faith and his vision for the future of the church. I truly believe that all of those things were important to him. Kyle was an incredible vessel used by God to transform the image of the church. I know that he prompted me to think about what I was doing, how I was living, and what I wanted my church to be. His thought started the change in my thought.

*Jennifer Frye*

*Louisville KY*

i did not know kyle lake. i never met him. i had not heard of him until jeff davenport, a director of a ministry at first presbyterian church in boulder, colorado, mentioned him last night. as jeff held back tears, he gave us a sense of the loss he was feeling, as well as the Church as a whole. through kyle's passing, many more will have heard the Good News. it pains me and many others here in boulder to know the grief and the pain that Jen and the children are going through. my thoughts and prayers are with all of you, and i most respectfully wish to join you in mourning kyle's passing and celebrating his life!

*in His grip*

*matt*

*boulder, co*

A Rare and Beautiful Man!

I love Kyle Lake, his family, and his church University Baptist Church.

Last night I journeyed through the maze of mourners to see his body and be with his family and this tragedy leapt into my soul and became real, permanent, and fatal. I can't hide from it anymore and the grief is devouring parts of me. My friend is gone. Kyle will be buried in one of those fine-jogging suits that only Kyle and west coast rappers can pull off well. He always looked good in those silky nylon suits. Let's be honest, Kyle looked good in everything, and it was more than the sum of his features. He had an uncanny ability to light up a room and draw people to him.

In 1999 I moved to Houston and left my dear friend, Kyle, as Pastor of UBC the church I planted. I called him six months later to tell him what I missed most about Waco, Texas where I had lived and served the last decade. At lunchtime every day in Houston, I got a little depressed. You see Kyle and I had lunch together almost every day, we ate at a new restaurant/upscale pool hall and we played pool and shuffleboard. There was a friendly rivalry and regular wagers for who would pick up the tab. It was a sacred place for us where conversations one day were painful and serious and the next day was nonstop laughter. We brought lots of friends with us through the years and often set up appointments with university students seeking friendship, counsel, and encouragement. We threw in a free game of billiards. I miss those conversations, his fearless sarcasm, wit, and humor. I miss my friend and I am angry.

I can't find a good place to direct my anger. Why the hell did Ben Franklin discover electricity? Why isn't UBC Episcopalian? I guess that would make it UEC. But mostly this is about a God who would allow this to happen in front of his congregation? This whole thing is dreadful and all I can do is pray that in Kyle's family and the church he loved so much that something beautiful will come from all this darkness. I'll pray a lot, try my best to have Kyle's sense of humor, and I'm gonna go buy the finest/most expensive jogging suit I can find. I'll be wearing it often and remembering a man I love.

*Chris Seay*

My husband (then boyfriend) and I attended UBC while at Baylor. Kyle certainly had a heart for students and was the backbone of a tremendous church. The idea of UBC is so fresh and appealing to our generation. Kyle reached people that normally would have never set foot in a church; his passion to reach those was evident to all. Kyle Lake was an amazing servant that spent his days here on earth building the Kingdom; we are confident that he is now rejoicing above with our Savior.

*Melanie Schulte*

I know I won't be the first or the last to tell you about Kyle's unsurpassable character. I think it is important for you to know how incredible your father's character was. So here it goes:

His faith was made complete by what he did- James 2:22

Your dad was joyful always- I Thessalonians 5:16

He had a wonderful ability to discern- Phillipians 1:10

Kyle trained himself to be Godly- I Timothy 4:7

Your dad loved God, believed in him, and was filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy-I Peter 1:8

He worshiped the Lord through prayer, music, and his preaching- Colossians 3:16

Kyle's happy heart made his face cheerful- Proverbs 15:13

His conversation was full of grace and seasoned with salt- Colossians 4:6

He was a friend that loved at all times- Proverbs:17:17

Kyle was slow to anger and quick to listen- James 1:19

Your father feared the Lord- Proverbs 1:7

He served the living and true God- 1 Thessalonians 1:9  
Devoted himself to prayer- Colossians 3:2  
Kyle trusted in the Lord- Proverbs 3:5  
Kyle used his spiritual gift of preaching to serve others, faithfully administering God's  
grace in it's various forms- 1 Peter 4:10  
He pleased God through his faith- Hebrews 11:6  
His daily life won the respect of others- 1 Thessalonians 4:12  
Your dad had a spirit of power, love, and self discipline- 2 Timothy 1:7  
Kyle never tired of doing what was right- 2 Thessalonians 3:13  
He pursued righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness- 1 Timothy 6:11  
He was confident that he who began a good work in him would carry it on to completion  
until the day of Jesus Christ- Phillipians 1:6  
Our prayer is that this will bring you great comfort in the years to come.

*We love all of you dearly*

*Brian Erica Braden and Caden Black*

I just wanted to share a brief overview of how I came to know Kyle and how important he was in the development of UBC. Without Kyle in the early years, UBC might not have made it.

I always knew Kyle Lake by the affectionate nick-name "Lake Dawg." He was interning for Doug Fields and Rick Warren at Saddleback Church, my home church in California and I was home for the holidays from Baylor when we first met. With his blond hair and crest white smile, he fit into the California setting so well I was amazed to find out he was a Texan and a 94 graduate of Baylor. After a long conversation about the joys of Waco life, ha ha, we discovered that we had a lot more in common than just Baylor.

Excitedly, I told Kyle all about this funky little church that had just started in Waco called University Baptist Church. I told him about how I was invited to one of the first services and how it was growing like crazy. I told him all about the music with Dave Crowder and the relaxed and open preaching by Chris Seay. After about a five minute sales pitch for the Church, in which Kyle was giggling/laughing in his own unique way, he let me in on the secret that he had an intimate knowledge of UBC already and that he was interning in California so he could bring back some of the things he learned at Saddleback to UBC.

Kyle returned to UBC in just the nick of time because the church was bursting at the seams with growth. With Chris, Dave, Kyle, and Pete in leadership rolls the church was the fastest growing church in the country for a time. It grew so fast that it seemed like every week our need for space got greater and greater. Then the church had two major leaps of faith. First, we bought a building. This was a major thing for a church consisting almost entirely of starving college students and starving pastors. Second, and this is where Kyle saved UBC, Chris Seay, the head pastor at the time, moved to Houston and left the church. This was a dark and scary time for this church we had grown to love. The future of the church was in despair, but Kyle took over as the lead pastor and quite literally saved UBC.

Since that time, UBC has helped thousands of people come to know Christ and grow in faith, all through Kyle's teaching. Dave Crowder is now known world-wide and for people like me UBC will always be my church home.

Kyle, Thank you for everything you have done in your brief life. Thank you for following God's call and reaching out to others.

We will love and miss you always.

*Sincerely*  
*Joe Ader*

I started attending UBC in 1995 as a freshman at Baylor. It was unlike any church experience I had known, and I immediately knew I was home. The leaders of this young church were passionate, real, and full of grace. I met Kyle while he was the Community Pastor at UBC and worked with him on the Inner City Kids ministry. I had met a lot of people in my lifetime who gave “lip-service” to embracing the community and those in need...but I had rarely seen anyone willing to live that out on a daily basis and be willing to actually get involved & live in community with these people. I had heard people talk about grace & being Christ-like, but had met few who exemplified and personified that type of unconditional love.

Since leaving UBC in 1999 when I graduated from Baylor I have dedicated my career and much of my free time & resources to helping those in need – especially the children – in the Waco community. I know that my experiences at UBC – with Kyle & the other leaders – are a big part of who I am today.

If I had to point out only one thing that Kyle leaves as a legacy to those who knew him it would be GRACE. Unconditional love and Christ-like acceptance of all who crossed his path.

*Sarah Collins*

Kyle and I became good friends on Spring Break 1993. Kyle, Jona, Grayson Gumm and I drove to Purgatory together in my car. Although I had pledged Kyle’s fraternity, I did not know him very well until this trip. All I knew about him when the trip started is that everyone liked him, he was a great soccer player and at the time he had a great mullet and an earring. Once the trip was over, I knew we’d be lifelong friends. Kyle was one of the guys in my wedding.

After being friends with Kyle for over 12 years, I can tell you from the bottom of my heart and with all sincerity that Kyle Lake is one of the greatest, most quality, genuine guys I have ever known. Of all the people in the world, I am having a hard time why a guy like Kyle would be called to heaven so soon. However, while it’s easy to ask why, I repeatedly thank God that I was blessed enough to have been able to call someone like Kyle a true friend.

To me, Kyle was:

- \* an always accepting, non-judgmental friend;
- \* someone to be silly with;
- \* someone that would always come up to me, give me a big bear hug and lay his head on my shoulder (the head on shoulder part was always a joke and we’d start laughing);
- \* someone I was always excited to see;
- \* someone that loved going to Taco Cabana and getting queso and tortillas for dinner;
- \* someone that was always laughing;
- \* someone that loved his family dearly;
- \* someone that embodied what it meant to be a Christian by truly practicing what he believed;
- \* an encourager;
- \* someone that would call you on the carpet if you were having a pity party or feeling sorry for yourself;
- \* someone that I can truly say I loved like a brother.

*All miss you Kyle*

*Ryan Thornton*

I was a friend and fraternity brother of Kyle's at Baylor from 1992-1996. I'm also a good friend of Jonah, Kristi and JD. The one thing I always remember about Kyle was his magnetic personality. He was an irresistible personality, and I can't imagine him having any real enemies. Kyle represented what it was like to be a "cool", confident person yet someone who was absolutely solid in his faith and walk with Jesus Christ.

Kyle was also a guy who much like Jesus displayed a "come as you are" attitude towards others. I don't ever remember him demeaning another or making fun of another at their expense (although he would rag you and kid you as a way of befriending you ☺). Kyle accepted anybody and everybody in a non-"preachy" kind of way. I think this was one of his greatest strengths in reaching out to a group of people who might not have tried out church or Christianity through any other means.

In short, Kyle was a person who loved God, loved others and loved life by living it. What a great legacy and person to try to be like! Hebrews talks about a "great cloud of witnesses" who are in heaven's grandstands watching us below. Kyle has joined that group of saints, and he is now cheering his family and his loved ones on to make life count, to live for what matters, to honor Jesus Christ, and to point others towards the Way. I'll miss Kyle, and I pray for God's blessings, provision, comfort and guidance for your family.

*Respectfully*

*Jonathan Shibley*

I was a fraternity brother of Kyle's at Baylor. I want Kyle's kids know that, to me, their father exemplified everything good about Christianity. He was devout without being even the slightest bit judgmental. It didn't matter what a person's background or belief system was-Kyle could communicate and connect with anyone. He taught by example. Plus, he had a playful cockiness, especially when playing sports, that made him especially endearing.

*Darian Stanford*

Dear family of Kyle Lake,

I am writing this as i sit in my dorm room on the night of Halloween. Having not ever met Kyle Lake or ever even having been to UBC, i am truly and deeply moved by this man and the kind of impact that he has had on the lives of so many people. One of my friends from High school called be and told me on Sunday morning to begin praying for the family of this poor pastor that has been in an incredibly huge accident. I closed my eyes, and, as i began to pray, the words began to flow... prayers for his Wife and children mostly. I felt this warmth in me like Martin Luther speaks of when we talk to God, and i knew that, out of this, something good will come. In chapel today the Author Terry Easu spoke the most honest and moving words i have ever heard in a situation like this. He was honest in saying that he was mad, and I admit as so many that i was mad also, and when I heard about this it touched me so deeply that i was questioning God's reasons for this. Deep down in the very core of my soul i truly believe that God uses everything for His Glory and for his amazing purpose, but the death of such a beloved man and servant of God was just to much to handle. I sat in chapel and began to have tears run down the sides of my cheeks and my heart burned for God to come near to me. To dive so deeply into the heart of Kyle's wife ( i don't even know her name, im sorry) and to fill her with an ever continuous presents of pure Love, and Pure Peace, not just the feeling kind but the soul truth of God and his purposes. As i sat and listened to this Author talk about this amazing 30 day journey that takes guts and truth and everything in a person to do it dawned on the that the Death of Kyle has brought my heart back to the Lord . I

have been dealing with my future and my purpose of what God has planned for me the past couple weeks and have been feeling as if i am not capable of doing the things that i feel God has called me to do for the Glory of his kingdom. being called to be some type of Missionary in a 3rd world country which honestly scares me a ton. Kyle's life and hearing is story has deeply inspired me to pinpoint the lies that Satan tries to tell us. Hearing about him and the kind of man he was, one not afraid, but fully overed in the Armor of God that Paul talks about in Ephesians 6. Kyle's story has inspired me and brought me on my knees to the feet of Jesus and has made me turn to him for answers to life's toughest situations. My heart hurts for Kyle's Wife and children and family, but one thing that they must know is that his death has brought back many to Christ, and I can't even imagine what it would be like to wake up one day and say "Surprise Me God" and the next thing you know you are at the very feet of Jesus, in the presence of the Almighty King. My prayers for all of you from the bottom of my soul..... all to the Glory and honor for the sake of Jesus Christ.

*Love Mallory King*

Hi, my name is Ashley Reed and I wanted to share a memory of Kyle. I was not a member of UBC, but I attended services a few times. I just wanted to share that one weekend, a past boyfriend and I took his youth group from back home to a service. This was also my first time to attend a service at UBC, and I just wanted to comment on how welcome and touched I was by Kyle's sermon. Kyle did not try to force any of his views on anyone but rather made me think about my eliefs and the way I lead my life. He was a very passionate preacher and loved his congregation. I just wanted to say thank you to his family for allowing him to touch us, especially the Baylor community, and we will keep them in our prayers.

*God Bless Ashley*

I had the pleasure of getting to know Kyle Lake when he was the interim youth minister at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church. It was my senior year of high school when he came on board to help lead the youth group after the departure of Byron Weathersbee. It was obvious that Kyle had a passion for the Lord, and a way to convey his passion to young people. I first saw it as a senior at Columbus. Though I didn't worship at University Baptist Church during my days at Baylor, it's apparent that Kyle never lost that ability to reach out to young people. He made scripture exciting and relevant. That's something that can be difficult to show to a senior in high school who thinks they are on top of the world.

Kyle brought on Mark Presley as his intern to help out with the youth. Mark and I became very good friends during his time at Columbus. When I arrived at Baylor the next fall, Mark kind of took me under his wing. I met so many good friends because of Mark, and indirectly, because of Kyle. Those are still some of my best friends to this very day. Although Kyle probably had no idea, he helped shape my college years. I am who I am today because of a lot of people. One of those people is Kyle Lake. They say that your college years are the best years of your life, and I fully believe that. Thanks, in part, to Kyle, I was able to find a place to fit in at Baylor.

Does this compare with bringing someone to the Lord? No, not at all. That is where Kyle truly was a special person. I never bothered to thank him for the indirect help he gave me. I'm sure if I had, he would have told me "it was nothing". To him it was nothing, because that is just who he was. He always reached out to help others. However, as an 18 year old freshman in college, it was everything.

*Thank you Kyle You are truly missed*  
*Matt Prim*

Kyle Lake was one of those people you can't explain - the kind that affect you just by living, the kind that draw you to God without realizing it. When I first met Kyle, his charm and smile, obvious gifts from God, put my heart at ease. I have only been attending services at UBC for 4 months, but from the beginning, it has felt like home. Kyle had a powerful presence every time he stepped into a room to speak, whether at the HUB or Sunday services. When I came to Baylor, I was a little apprehensive about finding a new church, in a new city, in a new state. When I moved to California my senior year of high school, I couldn't find a church, and it was heartbreaking. My whole high school life, up to that point, had been shaped by my youth group and youth pastor. I didn't know how I was going to make it without that connection my senior year. But, I managed to get by with a few sermons from my parent's church, but my faith really suffered. Needless to say, I hadn't had the best experience with finding a new church.

When I decided to come to Baylor, I prayed that God would lead me to the right church. I needed to be spiritually full. I went to the church fair and was struck by UBC's youthful, genuine attitude and freshness. But, I decided to test out a friend's church first - not a good idea. I left that service feeling empty and, honestly, frightened. Could all Waco churches be like that? The next Sunday I went to UBC, probably the best decision I have made in awhile. Of course, the music is absolutely phenomenal, but what really inspired me was Kyle's sermon. He spoke about the very thing I had been feeling the past week. I was hooked. He was so genuine in everything he said. I was so sick of the churches/pastors that didn't believe what they preached. I couldn't take the fakeness anymore. I was so thankful Kyle was there to provide a fresh, honest perspective. Every sermon put me back where I needed to be with God. For the first time, I told my friends and family about what I had heard in church. This is huge. I've always kept my faith to myself, but Kyle inspired me to profess my faith through love.

Outside of services, Kyle was just as personable. When I taught the three of you (Avery, Sutton, and Jude) in Sunday school for the first time, he came in to check on you. He might as well have stayed. He belonged there just as much as the three of you. Kyle was truly a child trapped in a 33 year-old's body. Have you ever heard a 33 year-old playfully giggle the way he did? He looked at you three (Avery, Sutton, and Jude) like there was nothing better on Earth, the same way he looked at your mom. Kyle could never be summed up in words, and a short little email from a girl who just barely knew him certainly cannot do him justice. Kyle loved God, embraced beauty, and lived life to the fullest everyday, just like he encouraged us to do. We should celebrate his life on Earth because we all know he's living it up in Heaven.

*Alyssa Pond*

My husband and I had only visited the church 3 times recently. But what we saw in Kyle was a pastor that definitely could reach the college crowd. We work in prison ministry at the Texas Youth Commission facility in Mart - so we know it takes someone very special to reach young people. I can only imagine how he has touched lives of those who had been around him a long time. He definitely touched ours after only 3 times of hearing him. Our prayers will continue to be with his family, friends and the congregation.

*Kathy Kunkel*

To Jen and the family of Kyle Lake,

I've been blessed over the past number of weeks to listen to Kyle by downloading his sermons. And I join with you in grieving the loss of your loved one. My prayers for your family will continue, for you Jen for strength is measure that you could not even imagine possible, and for Avery, Jude and Sutton, the memory to keep those precious moments with their daddy embedded in their hearts and minds. May God carry your family in this time.

loss  
grief  
overtaking me  
overtaking my soul  
tears long to pour forth  
yet I hold them back  
why does my heart respond like this  
shifting thoughts  
uncertainty  
pain  
emptiness  
questions racing through my mind  
thoughts too profound for words  
and words that will never be enough  
yet a heart stirred  
a life changed  
that longs to be well lived  
reminding of the purpose  
that every moment counts  
that every encounter be embraced  
that tomorrow may never come  
yet today is here  
so I must live  
I choose to live  
and not just survive  
but to thrive  
to live fully alive

even in the midst  
of sorrow  
of heartache  
there is joy  
you are my joy  
and in the loss  
there is gratitude  
for the impact  
of one life touching another  
for the encouragement  
for the wisdom  
for the speaking to my heart  
that which my heart longs to say  
there are words  
and a connection  
an understanding  
and there is faith  
there is hope  
there is love  
sacrificial love  
unending love  
indelible love  
and I live in that love  
alive  
fully alive  
today  
now

Grief is so unexplainable. There are words and then there aren't words. And when you finally think you have the words, they hardly express all that is going on deep within you – within your heart, mind and soul. Grief brings an array of emotion – anger, emptiness, loss, hurt, sadness, joy... unexplainable joy. This week has been a week of grieving and of loss.

For the past number of weeks, I have had the privilege to listen to Kyle. I have learned from Kyle. I have been challenged by Kyle. I have been encouraged by Kyle. And my life has been and will forever be blessed and changed by Kyle and his ministry. Kyle has a way of simply articulating things that have been on my heart, and thoughts that I have wrestled with deep within my soul.

Overwhelmed, I've questioned why God would take someone like Kyle home so soon. I wonder why so many people had to be watching as something so tragic took place. And then I wonder, am I ready to go? Not to Romania, but home, am I truly ready? When my bags should always be packed, I wonder if more realistically I am living out of my open suitcase. Do I merely live in light of what is to come – tomorrow, Romania, etc.? Or is my life marked by living for today, living in today, living TODAY? What if tomorrow never comes? Will I know that I lived well today?

In the midst of confusion, overwhelming thoughts and feelings, I hear my Savior calling me, calling each of us to himself, "...I will give you rest..." As my heart still hurts and grieves the loss of Kyle, and other losses that have once again been stirred, I find myself safe in the arms of my Jesus. It is there I find peace and comfort, the courage to live! To live well!

And I am encouraged, again by Kyle – by his life and in his death. In my grieving, listening to Kyle's funeral, I am again reminded to "Live life to its fullest" as Kyle always encouraged.

So to living and living well! To loving and loving well! To those who come in and forever change our lives!

WHOLLY HIS  
ALL THIS FOR OUR GREAT AND GLORIOUS KING †

*Emily Kerry*  
Portland, Oregon

I was in Princeton, NJ yesterday with my wife visiting some friends who here in town for a ministry leadership conference. We were having a discussion about church, what it looks like today and what we thought it should look like. I brought up UBC Waco and asked if they had ever visited there. My wife and I visited the church this past Easter on our way to Austin from Dallas. I was describing to our friends how amazing our experience there was, not only the building, but how the interwovenness of the body moved us. The one story I have told to numerous friends and some pastors was how I met Kyle briefly as he stepped into the men's bathroom, his sons in tow, to quickly change the toilet paper before the service began. I didn't even know he was the pastor until he stepped on stage. Kyle, unknowingly impacted me more in that moment than anything else that day. Not the music, not the artwork, not even the sermon, but his willingness to lower himself, to do I am sure the 'least' of jobs for the church. That will impact me for the rest of my life. I will continue to tell the story, and allow it to encourage and challenge all who hear it. Know that we are praying and grieving with you in New York.

Our love and prayers to Kyle's family, and to the body of UBC Waco.

*Jeremy Shore*

I want Avery, Sutton, and Jude to know that Kyle loved them so much. I met the Lakes through attending UBC and gained their friendship and trust as one of their babysitters. I've been so lucky to be given the opportunity to watch the

three kids on numerous occasions and I would like to share a few stories that I hope the kids will grow to appreciate.

The first night I babysat for them I was so nervous, I didn't want anything to happen so I followed the kids like a hawk. I was scared they would get hurt playing outside but inside wasn't safe either. Things didn't go so well, Sutton, Jude, and Avery were running around the living room and jumping on the couches. And all of a sudden Sutton jumped off the couch and hit his head on the edge of the fireplace. I panicked...he barely cried. We rushed to the athroom for band-aids and I didn't know what to do, I mean this was my first night babysitting for Kyle and Jen. Sutton ended up with a big bruise on his forehead and I was so scared for Jen and Kyle to return, how was I to explain it? And if things couldn't get any worse, Avery wanted to play a board game. So we went to the laundry room to pick out a game and she asked me to pick her up to see all the games on the shelf. Well, I was trying to be the cool, new babysitter and decided I would put her on my shoulders... she liked the idea too. As I went to pick her up I miss judged where we were standing and bumped her head into the door frame. She was a trooper and didn't cry but kept reminding me

all night to tell her mom and dad what I did. So, it's my first night with the Lake kids and I successfully injured two-thirds of them. Then Kyle and Jen returned and I was shaking. I decided to lay it all out for them, no time for small chat. They both looked at me and said it was fine, they understood kids get scrapes and bruises all the time. In an attempt to cheer me up Kyle tells me, "Hey, it happens all the time. Sometimes when I have both boys in my arms I accidentally knock one in to the doorframe trying to get through the door." I was sure I would never be invited back, but I was on many occasions.

One of the last times I babysat was on a Friday evening. I show up and the kids were in the living room having a great time with their dad. Kyle informed me it was "Dance Party" time. The t.v. was on a music channel, and all four of them were having a dance party...yes, Kyle included. He remarked that "Dance Party" had been going on for over an hour and Avery still had a million moves to perfect! He was so happy and I could tell he loved those kids so much. He was such a wonderful person and will always be a role model for his kids.

*Erika Meyers*

I did not know Kyle Lake in a personal way. He was a stranger to me, but one that touched my life all the same. I have attended UBC sporadically throughout my college career, but Kyle has always been there. As I listened to his sermons, every time I was able to find a connection to my life. I saw things in a different way and always left with a warm feeling in my heart and the assurance that God had a purpose for my life. Kyle had an easygoing demeanor and a way of making each sermon feel like a personal conversation among friends. Last week, he discussed a few topics from his recently published book, and I was deeply touched by the chapter about his "conversation" with Garth Brooks and unanswered prayers. I am sad that I was never able to know Kyle as a personal friend. He was obviously a man of God, with a pure, unselfish heart, and he has definitely left his mark on my heart. He was funny, intelligent and caring and he will be truly missed. My heart goes out to his family for the loss of such a wonderful human being. May his beautiful children carry on his legacy of faith.

*Jennifer Thompson*

I never had an in depth, personal conversation with Kyle, but his impact on me was incredible. For the 3 and a half years that I was at Baylor, I spent almost every Sunday listening to Kyle teach. His teaching taught me how to open my eyes and see God's beauty around me. One particular Sunday, he preached about a Coldplay song ("Politik") that had really touched me in my life, which caused me to realize God's presence in things that I had thought of as "secular." Through his action of using all art, all books, and all songs to describe God, I realized that God was more than just in Christian labels and church, but in every aspect of my life. Every week, he inspired me to see God in every little action that I did throughout the day. My experience at UBC formed my view on "religion" in a completely new way. I went to church, often by myself, because I felt God's presence in it. God spoke through Kyle to many people, especially to me.

*Laura McSparran Thomas*

Baylor Class of 2004

Kyle was a wonderful preacher and someone who seemed to me to truly love the line of work he was in. To most people, preachers (by job description) must love what they do. But, Kyle seemed to radiate happiness from the stage. UBC was always the church I compared all others too. During my time at Baylor, I attended the church, although not as much as I should. Kyle's messages always touched my heart, and I believe I was most at peace with myself when I attended. I am saddened

by the loss of him, not only to the church, but to his family. I hope that his family can take pride in knowing that Kyle really made a difference in my life, and I know that I am not the only one. He was a man of God and it showed in everything that he did. I am grateful to have known him as my pastor.

*Sincerely*  
*Megan Hairston Jannise* Baylor '05

My first memory of Kyle was when he was serving FBC Tyler as the intern youth minister for the summer of '92. I had just moved there as a scared 15 year old who was trying to learn to love a new place and find new friends. As he led a group of teenagers (albeit acting like one himself as he ran across the roof of the girls' rooms leaning over the edge into the window to give us all a scare), he taught me how to feel loved and appreciated when he chose me to stand and receive "I love you because." He was wise beyond his years (was it only 19?) and called out me, the new kid on the block. Throughout the next 4 years of my life, I learned to love Kyle as a mentor and friend. He floated in and out my life through my connections with his family and my friends. When I began attending Baylor in '94, I decided to give this brand new church a try - UBC. Two years later (or so...), this amazing guy entered our congregation as our community pastor. It was thrilling to see Kyle on a regular basis. I'll never forget his first sermon in the Hippodrome...it was awful! He stuttered through the whole thing, repeating phrases and sentences over and over and using his favorite word - "man" - all the time, even in the prayer!! But we hung on and sat through it all, loving him for trying and praying he would get better. He did.

As my friendship with him developed even more at the same time, my relationship with my future husband, Chris Aho, blossomed, and Kyle became even more important in my life. Always offering a hug and a smile, and making me feel as though he knew me and remembered the details of my life, I looked forward to seeing him every week and seeking his advice. He joyfully showed off his office, and we laughed at first the painted trees in the corner and the monkeys on the bookshelf and then the Augustine quote on the wall (who is that, I wondered!).

Sometime during his arrival to UBC (the time blurs in my mind), I dropped by the offices at the 11th street building. I often served by volunteer work in answering phones, etc, and needed to check in for something. It was obvious as I entered the room, I was interrupting a precious moment with Kyle and some girl. I thought, who is this girl trying to win Kyle's heart? Good luck, Jen! Many a girl has tried (I had a few friends to add to the list), but none could measure up. But there was something so genuine and real - she was radiant and beautiful in a t-shirt and baseball cap. And somehow I knew at that moment, if Kyle was ever going to fall in love, she might be it. She too could light up a room, make you feel as if you were the only one capturing her attention, and laugh like no tomorrow. She seemed his match. She was.

Chris and I became more serious in our relationship and often sought out Kyle's advice and humor, and he often gave his jokes and laughter unsolicited. Chris began to meet with Kyle regularly in a mentoring relationship, so when he began to prepare for our engagement, he sought Kyle's involvement (he'll have to tell you more on how that conspired). The night we were engaged, Kyle taped our engagement from the balcony of UBC. I will cherish that video for the rest of my life. I can hear Kyle whispering to Chris Seay and Dave Crowder and then giggling his infamous giggle, but quietly. When we finally faced the camera, he began whistling and shouting and his voice is burned into my brain. Such joy, such ease at celebrating with his friends. I will never forget his "woo, hoo"!

When we began planning our wedding, we knew that Kyle would play a role somehow. We were so close to Chris Seay and felt we needed him to marry us, so we asked Kyle to usher. Such a humble, servant's role, and, certainly, Kyle had better things to do than usher at a college student's wedding. But he made us feel as though he wouldn't want to do anything else and heartily accepted. He was laughter and grace at the rehearsal dinner...showing up with bleached blond hair

and apologizing..."I didn't have your phone number at the salon or I would have asked!" We cherished that day and now even more as I look at those photos of that crazy blond kid.

So many other memories...he and Kristi crying at his wedding, always welcoming us "home" to UBC with a big "AHOs!", that great laugh, that great smile, his mom and dad always hugging and kissing and asking details about my life- our lives, his sister Kristi being the first person I hugged after I came down the aisle at my wedding as she was on her way to the bathroom being like 8 months pregnant. Seeing Kyle and Jen and Avery at Quiznos when Avery was like two years old. She spilled something on her dress and pointed to the spot and said, "Uh, oh" so Jen could wipe it up. Being thrilled and laughing at the news that they would have twin boys. What is Jen going to do??? We KNEW they would be like Kyle!! And that wonderful Christmas picture of Avery standing perfectly in front of Santa with her designer glasses and hands by her side while the twins were beet red, crying and trying to leave Santa's lap and go in two different directions. I laughed so hard...poor Jen, she got Kyle two times over! Then years began to pass and we didn't see our friend much as we'd moved to North Carolina. But I thought of him often. I would tell stories to others...I knew this guy...and how do you share what Kyle was like to someone who'd never met him? He is life. More alive than anyone I have ever met. He is joy. Complete through and through. He is love and acceptance. He teaches me what Christ was like on earth...do you need a modern day example? Look to Kyle. As my husband says, he is the coolest person I will ever know and makes me feel like I am too. I never took the time to write the note that I did to so many others in my life..."Kyle, you are such a blessing to me. You have helped mold me into who I am today by showing me a living example of who God is. I thank God for your life and for you being real to me. My path in life has been formed by you...your relationship to Chris and encouragement to his following God's call to ministry. Much blessings and love to you and Jen. Always know you have changed so many lives. Never stop. Grace and peace, Natalie Aho." I never felt the urgency...Kyle was always going to be there.

How is it that I will never get to see that smile at UBC? The "someday" in my mind of when we would have a Sunday off and be able to visit UBC will never come. Not that way anyhow. How do I live with that thought? How can I comprehend that Jen will never hold his hand again on Earth? How is it that those precious babies will not laugh with their dad again? Why Kyle? Of all the people in the world, why Kyle? We need him. We miss him. We will forever be changed. God have mercy on us. We need hope.

Praise God for Kyle's final words to us all. I will try my best and ask God's grace to help me to embody Kyle's life in my ministry. May I be as loving and gracious and joyful and content and LIFE as Kyle taught me to be, honoring his memory forever. And he will live on...through me, then to others whom I touch...already making a difference in North Carolina. God give us peace. God give us comfort. God give us life.

*Natalie Aho*

I attended the Catalyst 2005 Conference where Pastor Kyle was one of the speakers. I remember clearly how funny and on target he was with his message. His book about God's Will was one of the few books that I purchased for my own personal reference. My deepest sympathies go out to his wife, his entire family, friends, and congregation. I pray God's loving arms surround you all and know the memory and legacy of Kyle Lake will go on forever.

In his young life he made an impact on my life and I did not even have a chance to speak to him personally. I will do my best to take the lessons that I learned from Pastor Kyle and pass his wisdom and knowledge on to others...that way his legacy really will never be forgotten.

*You are all in my prayers*

*Kimberly L Morrison*

I was so fortunate to have attended maybe a dozen services at UBC over the last few years. My husband is a youth minister at another church in Waco, but we attended UBC when he was on vacation or if I just needed a break. We took our kids to the church because we love it so much.

I think Kyle was incredibly gifted at making God's word relevant and challenging. I grew up in the church, and have been involved in many in-depth Bible studies, but Kyle had such a way of challenging me to grow deeper in my faith. I loved being there when he was preaching and I am so fortunate to have been able to hear him.

I think the world is a better place for his life and the impact he made on so many people - and I know that influence will continue to grow.

What I would like you to know about your dad was that he touched SO MANY more people than he could know. I didn't know him personally yet he touched my life profoundly. I also know he loved the four of you very much and you were such a JOY in his life. He always had stories about you and he spoke about you with such delight - I hope that is very clear to you. You are blessed to have had such a wonderful father and lover of the Lord. I know that his faithfulness will bring you much love and blessings for years to come.

*With gratitude and praise for his life!*

*Shana Fields*

I started going to UBC in 1997. I immediately felt at home there and started growing in my faith. I had always considered myself a Christian, but didn't have a relationship with the Lord. When I attended UBC I felt the Lord calling me to serve Him and I began going to the Inner City Children's Ministry on Thursday afternoons. What a great experience! I loved being with those children! I used to bring them to church with me on Sunday mornings. They loved the music! They thought that everyone was "cool" and "funny". They started to grow in their faith as well! It was such a wonderful thing to be a part of. Chris, David, and Kyle built a church where everyone could come to worship and feel at home. When I wasn't at church for several weeks in a row, Kyle called me to see if everything was ok. I was still involved in the Kid's Ministry, but I hadn't attended church. Kyle's great sense of humor, compassion, and love for the Lord, was the reason I started attending again. I recommitted my life to the Lord. I am so thankful for my time and experience at UBC and with the amazing people there! The influence and the impact that church had on my life is too great to express. I have taught inner city children for seven years because of the experience I had at UBC. It was truly life-changing.

*Emily Malloy Lund*

I just wanted to say I'm sorry for the loss of Kyle. I remember him in high school and what a great guy he was! My prayers and thoughts are with you all

*Katie McArthur*

I didn't have the opportunity to get to know Pastor Kyle very well because I am only a freshman and have been attending UBC for 2 months. From that first Sunday during Welcome Week, I knew UBC was the church I wanted to call home. I never even visited another church until Sunday, October 30, which was unfortunately the day of Kyle's death. Even though I had yet to develop a close personal relationship with Kyle, he had a way of capturing my attention and reaching young people that no other pastor I've ever encountered has been able to do. UBC is about authenticity and community, and I found those qualities in Kyle because he honestly practiced what he

preached. He greeted me with a smile every time I saw him, and I looked forward to getting to know him better as a pastor and friend. He just made himself so accessible to the students here, and he will be missed so much. I really didn't realize until yesterday how much he made an impact on my spiritual life since I've been at Baylor. We are praying so much for his family, and we wish them the best. God bless!

I'm not even a Baylor student. I'm transferring next semester because soon after I started classes at UT, I realized that Baylor was the place I wanted/needed to spend the next four years of my life--and Kyle was part of that.

My boyfriend attends Baylor and was immediately drawn to UBC. He would call me after church on Sundays and Wednesdays and tell me all of the awesome things that Kyle had spoken about and how he had never felt like any other preacher was on the same wavelength as him. Kyle just understood and could convey the thoughts of someone who was raised in church but found themselves bored and in a rut. When I came to visit, I went with him to church and found out exactly why he had found his home there. The moment Kyle walked onstage, I could sense that everyone was listening intently. He was so comfortable and conversational that you couldn't help but find yourself nodding and laughing during the sermon. I briefly met him at the Love Feast and was struck by what a kind, friendly, happy, and magnetic guy he was--and what a bright, infectious smile he always wore. I was so excited and interested to hear that his next sermon was going to be about one of my very favorite movies, Garden State. That's the kind of innovative and appealing ideas that I know drew so many people to him.

I was looking forward to going to church at UBC because of what I had experienced the few times that I had been. For so long I've felt spiritually dead, but began to feel stirrings and began thinking in a new, refreshed way after hearing excerpts from Kyle's book. I barely knew him--we were only in the same room a handful of times--but I had already begun to see him as a friend and teacher and couldn't wait for the new things he had in store for me to learn.

As silly as it sounds, I had even decided that when I got married, he'd be the one to perform the ceremony seeing that my boyfriend and I were going to be UBC members leading up to that.

Kyle was just an incredible guy who I thank God for having the opportunity to have met.

*Love Anna Hering*

To Kyle's precious sons-

I just happened to be at the same place as you on what I believe was both of your "first" haircuts....maybe second. You both cried and screamed and kicked and wanted no part in a haircut...who does? But your mom and dad knew exactly what to do....bribery. You were both bribed with suckers, and it worked!!! The tears stopped. Your parents took turns holding you in place as the guy cut away at that beautiful blond hair, and even had to separate you at times because you were influencing each other to cry. Because I'm not a mom yet, I got a kick out of watching this whole fiasco, but your parents did a great job. One of you insisted on having the other one in the room, and it was so cool to see the bond between two brothers, even as young as you were. You held each other up, and helped each other to be strong. Now you have to do that for your mom and sister, and continue to do it for each other. Your dad loved you so much. He had an amazing impact on my life and everyone else's that he touched. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

*Sincerely*

*Marianna Clement*

I never had the pleasure of meeting Kyle Lake, but just from what I have heard of the kind of pastor, father, husband and friend he was I know I missed out on knowing a wonderful person. I would just like to say to Kyle's church and his family that my husband and I have been praying for you and so has our church. So during this time of grief just try and find some comfort in knowing that other Christians are praying for you everyday. May God bless each of you during this time.

*Jamie and Craig Parker*  
San Antonio, Texas

Kyle Lake was one of the most amazing people I have ever met. He was so full of life and vision and beauty. I feel so blessed to have known him, even if for just a few years. He always made me and everyone else feel like he knew them personally and cared about them deeply, which he obviously did. I want to be more like Kyle. He embodied Christ in so many ways, and he made me want to live a life like his. He truly fleshed out the phrase that became his trademark: "Let us love God, embrace beauty, and live life to the fullest." He has touched my life forever; I will never forget him.

*Meg Taylor*

Dear Lake children,

I write to you as a stranger from St. Louis, MO. Our daughter, Katie, a Baylor student, attended your church. I had the privilege of attending your church with her one day while down visiting. I also know that your father had been a counselor with Kids Across America (KAA), a division of Kanakuk. Faith, KAA and your church were the common grounds that I shared with your father, although we never met. So you see, the impact he had on others was great. Know that people in St. Louis and many, many other places throughout the U.S. are praying for you. I will look forward to meeting your dad in Heaven, and will continue to pray for all of you. Love and blessings...

*Indy Conrad and family*

My name is J.D. Norris, and I was a member of UBC during my time as an undergrad at Baylor (1996-2000). Kyle was such a central part of my positive experience at UBC, and I'll miss him dearly. Every time I had the pleasure of interacting with him, Kyle was always so upbeat and nonjudgmental...a wonderful example of Christ's love. Kyle truly embodied UBC's principle of being real before God and one's brothers and sisters in Christ. During my time at UBC, I really feel that he was an important part of helping me learn how to walk more closely with the Lord through his example. At the risk of sounding trite, my thoughts and prayers truly will be with his family and the UBC family in the days and weeks to come. I look forward to the day when we're all reunited with Kyle in Christ's victory.

*With deepest sympathy*

*J.D. Norris*

Unfortunately I didn't have the opportunity to know Kyle very well, but just from my brief encounter with him I realize he was a blessing in everyone's life that he touched. I work for Birkman International, Inc. Kyle recently came and got certified in our instrument so that he could use it to help the young married couples he often worked with. We have many people certified over the course of a year and I often cannot put a face with a name, but Kyle was different. Kyle stood out to me because he was gregarious, friendly, kind and warm. He exuded goodness and there was just something about him that made him special and unique from everybody else. When you talked you truly felt like Kyle was listening, and I realized all of this just by spending a few hours of time

with him over the course of his training. I mourn his loss not because I knew him very well, but because I am saddened that so many other people in life will not have the opportunity to meet this wonderful person. I would like for his wife and children to know that Kyle was an inspiration to me because of the way he lived his life. I am so very sorry for their loss.

*With warm regards Margaret White*

I don't have one extremely important story about how Kyle impacted my life. I didn't have a close friendship with him, but my life was impacted nonetheless. I attended UBC for three years while at Baylor. It was a wonderful time in my life, and I will always love that church. Kyle impacted me week after week. His sermons would challenge me and make me reexamine and think about God and my life. As someone who grew up always in church, I welcomed his fresh perspective. I loved the humor in his messages. I remember one week when he had the wrong scripture reference written down and decided to just go with it, until someone yelled out the correct verses. His response was "Thanks! You're tithe is on us this week." His smile each week before the service would encourage me. Whenever I would see him, he was quick to smile and ask how things were. One thing that stands out about him is his approachability. Anyone could talk to him about anything. I remember laughing and joking with him at the 80's prom. I remember watching one of his sons run down the hall and into his arms after the service one Sunday. The memories could go on, but the important thing that I learned from Kyle is that you can impact another life through all the little things. It was the day-in and day-out part of his life, just the way that he lived, that influenced me most. Kyle, and UBC, played an important part in my life and in teaching me to "love God, embrace beauty, and live life to the fullest," and I am forever grateful.

*Sarah Isenhower*

Kyle Lake – a man who will forever be remembered by many, and a man who, one day we'll see again in Heaven. I knew Kyle as a friend, prior to his debut as pastor of UBC. I had the amazing opportunity to be a part of the UBC family just after its inception. What was once a little white church with 60 members on the outskirts of campus, and had a worship team led by the Seay family and Dave Crowder, has since turned into an incredible sanctuary of believers unlike any church experience most will come across in their lifetime. I'm honored to be able to call Kyle and Jen friends of mine from a precious time period in life. I knew Kyle and Jen before they dated, and then during and after their fairytale relationship began. Kyle was full of life and Jen was his perfect match. I will forever remember how he wore a smile on his face that was simply contagious. He was, simply, a happy man. His "jokester" spirit, combined with his passion for building relationships in Christ, were his trademarks. You could meet Kyle once and know that you had a friend for life. Kyle was an encourager, a friend, and a man after God's heart.

In addition to being part of my sweet memories of Baylor, Kyle befriended my brother, Michael Sheets, when he transferred to Baylor shortly after I graduated. Michael and Kyle became instant friends, and as many would say about their own friendships with Kyle, shared a special connection. Kyle and Jen are a part of my Baylor family and that will never change. Some people come in and out of your life for a reason, and some leave footprints on your hearts that stay with you for a lifetime. Kyle was that footprint not only for me, but for many.

Kyle is and will be missed by all who knew him. The loss of someone so dear is indescribable. However, God delights in the man He has gained into His kingdom. God Bless you Jenn, Avery, Jude and Sutton! May God's immeasurable love comfort your hearts daily, and may you hold tight to the memories of Kyle that you've all been blessed with as the years go by.

*God Bless You All  
Jennifer Sheets Olsen*

I grew up in Tyler, Texas with Kyle, and I was a good friend with his older brother, Jona. I've known Kyle since he was 4 years old. Being a year older, for a bit I felt like Kyle's elder. But it didn't take long in life until I was the one looking up to him. His smile, his laugh...he was just so very full of life. His personality and outlook on life was just simply infectious. I will miss his jokes, his hugs. Whether people know it or not, the world isn't the same without him.

*Glenn Abernathy*

Jenn, Avery, Sutton, Jude,

I have three "events" about your husband/Dad I would like to share with you. Although there are many others that will always be vivid in my mind, these are the three that have played over and over again in my mind this past month.

1) When I was fourteen (freshman in high school), Kyle came to be our youth interim at Columbus Avenue after Byron Weathersbee left (I can still remember Kyle's first Wednesday night back in 1995). The first story I want to tell you takes place in December 1995 at Copper Mountain Ski Resort in Colorado. For one reason or another, Kyle flew in a day or two late and met the youth group. I remember how excited I was that Kyle was going to be staying in our (freshman guys') hotel room. I thought he was the coolest guy in the world... with his GOLD, ANTIQUE BRACELET, big smile, cool hair, and carefree personality.

The first day on the slopes, the entire youth group gets to the top of the mountain, and Kyle has this brilliant idea that we play "ski tag" all the way down the mountain. He nominates himself as "It" and yells out, "Go!" So about thirty of us (all high school kids) and Kyle, this seminary student, all go flying down the mountain trying not to get tagged by Kyle's ski pole. I'm pretty sure by the time we reached the bottom of the mountain, he had tagged us all. It was one of the greatest games I've ever played and have often instigated Kyle's "ski-tag" game with youth groups I have worked with through the years.

2) Back to Kyle's GOLD, ANTIQUE BRACELET... All I remember about the history of it is that he said he found it in an old antique shop (I can't remember where or when). He wore it for years (through college and seminary I believe). The Sunday before he got married (I was a junior in high school), he pulled me over to the side at church, took off his beloved gold, antique bracelet that I had admired for years, and he gave it to me. It's been one of my most prized possessions ever since. He called it the "bachelor bracelet" and decided he could no longer wear it since he was getting married. He had to pass it on. Kyle was good at passing good things on to others.

I wore that bracelet for a long time and eventually stored it away in my "treasure box". My treasure box is a place where I keep my most cherished life-possessions. There is an old Bible from Jerusalem my grandparents gave me when I was a kid, a snapshot picture of my childhood love, a tiny old clock, a few necklaces I've worn through the years, special letters from special people, the scarf my prom date wore senior year in high school, and lots of other sentimental stuff. I put Kyle's bracelet in there as one of my most prized and cherished Life-artifacts.

When Kyle died, I went to my treasure chest and pulled out the old, antique bracelet. It's either been on my wrist or in my pocket ever since October 30th, 2005. It reminds me of who Kyle is and what he believed in, how he lived and how he touched my life.

3) This is perhaps the most important of my three stories about Kyle and the reason I loved him most. When I was a sophomore in college, I was in the middle of an apostasy which I began when I was 17. Kyle had kept up with me ever since I was a freshman in high school (at that point, almost six years). For an entire semester, Kyle met with me once a week and simply listened to my questions and doubts. He didn't try to press his own thoughts and theologies on me. He simply listened, and when I would ask what he thought, He would either respond with a humble answer or another question.

During that time in my life, I had encountered at least half a dozen ministers who did nothing but tell me I was wrong and that I was foolish for thinking the way I did. Needless to say, during that time in my life, ministers were my least favorite people in the world. Kyle was an exception. He did nothing but love me and meet me once a week for an entire semester to help me work through my own thoughts, doubts, and questions. He had an entire church to run and hundreds of other people who would have loved to have been meeting with him, but he took the time to make sure my life was going to be at its best, and he expressed understanding towards where I was in life.

I love him for that, and, years later, I remember him for that and will always be grateful to him for being a minister, mentor, and friend who was accepting of my desire to find my own way in Life.

I have been doing youth ministry for almost three years now, and Kyle will always glow in my Heart when I'm loving on kids and helping them find their own way...

\*So those are three of many FOOTPRINTS that your Dad/husband left in my life. He was one of the best men I will ever know.

I was in Oak Wood Cemetery on the Sunday Morning (October 30, 2005) I got the call about Kyle (ironically, I was standing less than 20 yards from where he was buried). I have gone several times a week these past few years, and I am always there Sunday mornings just to walk, think, pray, read, and write... but on that day, my "quiet sanctuary" (Oak Wood), where I pondered the relationship between Life and Death almost every day for many years, suddenly became an even deeper reality for me... The graves were no longer of strangers whom I could only use my imagination to create a story of what their lives had been... I now had a friend who was now remembered there... a friend whom I had actually walked alongside in life... A friend I had actual details and memories of... he was only the second friend I have ever had who has made the Mysterious Journey.

Now, instead of just having Jesus in my mind as an inspiration of what "life to the fullest" means, I will have Kyle standing next to Him in my Heart and mind as I wake up each day and embrace the Sacred Journey.

Jenn, I know he loved you SO SO MUCH with joyous companionship, wild laughter, and unending passion... He had SO MUCH passion for you. (I remember seeing it the last time I saw you guys at the movie theater... I was wearing a "Kiddieland" t-shirt, and Kyle looked so proud to be standing next to you as he informed me that Avery had the same shirt... He delighted in you.)

Avery, Sutton, Jude, your Dad was a man filled with Light. He loved everyone (his kids and wife most of all), and he gave his life away for something he believed was good and the most abundant way to live. If you know anything about your Dad, know that he did love God with all that he did, embraced Beauty in everything, and lived his life to its fullest. He adored you guys more than anything else in this life and world, and he left countless FOOTPRINTS that will echo throughout Eternity...

*Sincerely With Love*

*Jonathan Hal Reynolds*

To laugh often and love much; to win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children; to earn the approbation of honest citizens and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give of one's self; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived--this is to have succeeded. -Ralph Waldo Emerson

"We are here to laugh at the odds and live life so well that Death will tremble to take us up." -

*Charles Bukowski*

My heart is saddened at the loss of such a wonderful man and leader for the church. My husband and I came to Truett in 2000 to study and immediately fell in love with UBC, Kyle's teaching, and the worship. We came not because it was a cool place to worship God, but because our faith was challenged to grow each Sunday. We immediately made efforts to get involved to serve the students and community at UBC. Kyle's teaching was inspiring, intelligent, and had a depth that challenged our relationship with God to grow deeper and more intimate. Kyle and the leaders of the church had a vision that was new, dangerous, and exciting to reaching the Waco community. Kyle invited me to be a pastoral counselor to the girls within the church, he offered my husband and I a chance to teach a Sunday-school class on discipleship. There was a very turbulent year for us in our marriage. It was necessary for us to serve others and be challenged spiritually for us to grow up and mature in our marriage. His messages did that for us. My biggest memory will be when we told him we would be leaving Texas to attend another Seminary. Kyle took us out for coffee and handed us Brian McLaren's book to read. He didn't have to reach out to us, we were no deacons of the church, but he took the time out to show he really cared for where our heart for God was and that he supported us in our journey. He prayed over us and encouraged us to continue to reach out to others in love. We left that coffee shop feeling loved, that we mattered to someone, and that our service was important to the church. It touched our hearts and healed us after we had been hurt by other ministries before Texas. He reminded us that there are healthy ministers out there that have a genuine heart and that there was hope. If there is anything we could say to the family, it is that they are loved. No matter where you go, there are people all over the nation that have been touched by Kyle and will look back and say- he was a great man, a devoted father, a loyal husband, and, most of all, he loved God. Mention his name, and you will find family.

Thank you to the family, for the time you supported him in his ministry. God used him, and used your support.

*Until We See Him Again*

*Matt and Corie Weathers*

I stumbled upon the article that spoke of Pastor Kyle's death, and it has been on my mind ever since as it has with all of you no doubt. The reason why it is unusual that it is on my mind is because I am on the east coast and have never met any of you. And although I couldn't tell you where your church is other than its address, my thoughts and prayers make me feel as though I am with you.

I have recently moved back to N.Y. after accepting a staff position with North Country Fellowship Church and read about Pastor Kyle in a ministry newsletter I receive. As I mentioned above it has been heavy on my heart ever since. Please know that a girl in NY in vocational ministry is thinking and praying for you all during this difficult time. And although you may have heard this passage before, I want to end with it as it is my favorite.

Isaiah 43:2 When thou passest through the waters, I [will be] with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

*Heidi M Monaghan*

Dear family of Kyle Lake,

I just recently learned of the loss of Kyle by reading the Baylor magazine, and I was deeply saddened by the news.

I knew Kyle because we played for the Baylor soccer team together during 1990-1992. Kyle was the best player on the team, a terrific athlete, and a true leader for everyone on the team.

I remember the black pick-up truck Kyle drove which towered above anything else in the parking lot. I remember Kyle had an infectious personality and a smile as wide as Texas. His character and

Christian conviction was evident without ever hearing him talk about these things. I learned after I left Baylor that Kyle went into full time ministry, and I remember thinking how fortunate those around him would be.

I know he will be greatly missed by many. My prayers are with his family.

*Sincerely  
Jeremy Ward*

I'm so thankful that God led me to UBC my senior year at Baylor (1999-2000), and that I had a chance, however brief, to be part of Kyle Lake's congregation. His preaching impacted me more than I will ever understand in this lifetime.

The moment I remember most clearly is listening to him speak about Romans 7, where Paul says that he does the evil that he despises, rather than the good that he desires. Kyle gave the example of a disagreement with his wife, that he might say something that he did not wish to say to her, but that when he wanted to apologize, the words just wouldn't come out. Something about the words just dropped the concept into place in my brain. For the first time, I understood what Paul was saying, that it wasn't just some obscure, pious words outside my realm of experience, but was something real that I had experienced. That is now one of my favorite passages, and I frequently recall it to remind me that even Paul struggled to surrender to righteousness.

One other moment that still sticks in my mind is the week after Avery was born. Kyle told the congregation that his daughter looked just like him, and her picture came up on the screen, with spiky hair and a goatee drawn on. Everyone laughed, but, behind the silliness, we all saw the pride and love in Kyle's eyes and voice. Although Kyle was only my pastor for a short time, much of my Christian growth since then goes back to what he taught me about the applicability of Scripture to my life and looking at a secular world with the eyes of Christ. Kyle's ministry lives on in my life, and my prayer is that God would use me to speak His words to just one person as clearly as Kyle spoke them to me one day in the midst of a crowd.

*Marianne Giesecke*

I remember the first time I went to UBC a couple of months ago. Kyle was preaching, and he had like five Bibles. He kept flipping through all different ones; reading different translations, seeing how they related to the others. He wasn't content with what just one bible had to say, he wanted to now what they all had to say, and he wanted the congregation to make up its own mind based on what they all had to say. I remember him sitting up there on a stool, with a pile of bibles on the stool next to him; fumbling around with them, making jokes about how many bibles he always had to bring when he talked.

*Cathleen Mosley*

I've attended University Baptist Church for the better part of the last 6 years – 4 years during school, 2 years after graduation... all under the spiritual guidance and leadership of Kyle Lake.

College commonly serves as a time of inward reflection and self-realization for young people who are in the process of establishing a new and independent identity. My years in school while attending UBC were no different - I found myself face to face with a world of new temptations and confusions. I consider myself eternally blessed that I was introduced to Kyle's ministry during this time. God spoke through Kyle directly to my heart week after week as I dealt with questions about my faith and my place in the service of Christ.

I was raised in the church and my walk had grown stagnant at best going into my freshman year at Baylor. It was under Kyle's unique and progressive leadership that I began to understand what it meant to be truly Christ-like. At the risk of sounding cliché, after 16 years in the church I genuinely developed a faith of my own under Kyle's teaching. His devotion to understanding and interpreting the Word of God has changed my life. I can't begin to express how much I will miss Kyle Lake.

- Jonathan Paul Smith

Kyle wouldn't have recognized me, I didn't know him personally, but I always recognized him-around Baylor, getting coffee, and, of course, at UBC where I go to church. He was someone I noticed and looked up to because he was so real- not a "holier than thou" pastor. I always loved his sermons because they weren't what you would expect. He put things into perspective in a new way for me, and I always appreciated that. He didn't try to TELL us how to relate with God, but he encouraged us to try different ways. He made God personal to me. I always learned something from Kyle and could see from the way he spoke, carried himself, related with people, that he was so in love with God. The one thing that gives me comfort in all this is the thought that he probably wanted to know God more than ANYONE or ANYTHING in his life and now he's surrounded by Him- eternal love. So maybe I didn't know Kyle Lake's favorite color, or what he did for fun... but I did know his character and his passion- and they will always inspire me.

*Kaleigh Anderson*

To The Lake Family:

"A man of God I did not know.  
You know him as a husband and a daddy  
A pastor and friend  
And even a brother.  
He is a servant and yes our God is so well pleased.  
When he went home Jesus Christ saw Kyle,  
He yelled out with such authority,  
"You are mine indeed, you lived your life unselfishly  
Yes, my servant, my friend, I am well pleased!"  
At that moment as he with amazement saw Jesus,  
he cried, and said,"These are the words I have  
longed to hear when I made the decision  
to draw near."  
I am yours and you are mine  
and I now am home to safely abide."

*Teresa Criswell*

He left a legacy. He may no longer be here with us on earth  
Yet his legacy will last beyond the years.  
We must do what Kyle said after each sermon he so lovingly  
taught, "Love God, Embrace beauty, Live life  
to the fullest."

--Love in Christ, Teresa Criswell, Rochester Hills, Michigan

(We did not know him personally, however it must have been a privilege). God bless his wife and beautiful children, family & friends.

Kyle Lake was a stranger to me. I never met the man in real life. We have some mutual friends, but I've never even been to Texas. My name is Adam Sheaffer, and I am a youth pastor in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. I wonder if Kyle or his family have ever even visited this area of the country.

Even though he was a stranger, this follower of Christ has greatly influenced me. After worshiping with the David Crowder Band on several different occasions, I began to read more and more about their passion for worship and music through their website, which led me to UBC Waco's website. Something was so clearly different to me about this church and how they lived their faith. The website sure didn't feel like a church website. For starters, it was creative and pleasing to the eye. I was born only four years after Kyle, so I feel that I can honestly say that he and I had the same heartbeat for reaching and loving younger generations in our communities. I think we both saw some of the same problems in the church (the North American church, that is), and Kyle strikes me as an improver rather than a complainer. What I mean is that he led his church in a creative, innovative way in an effort to reach younger people with the unchanging message of God's love.

The more I read about UBC Waco and their vision for loving their community, I was challenged to rethink the way I lead our ministry to young people. I didn't want to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but I did realize that God's Word and His eternal character should be the only things that never change in our ministry. With the help of several godly and creative friends, we completely changed our youth ministry and renamed it Rooftop Revolution ([www.rooftoprevolution.com](http://www.rooftoprevolution.com)), based on the declaration of Psalm 71:17-18. Rather than create more programs, we began challenging our students to let their very lives be a declaration of God's marvelous deeds. We stopped teaching how to improve and become more like God and started teaching more about God.

"What do I want Kyle's children to know about their father? What can I give them to remember his life by?" Avery, Sutton, June...like I said, I never met your dad. As best as I know, he has never met any of the people that I have served with or ministered to here in PA, but his footprints are everywhere in our ministry. You might not see his name anywhere, but he doesn't sound like the type of guy that wanted his name in lights. If you ever look at our website or stop by and worship with us here in Doylestown, you will see the impact that your dad made in our lives. I want you to know that he challenged us to think. He challenged us to enjoy life. He challenged us to celebrate, even in the midst of our most difficult times, that there is hope in the wonderful name of Jesus. You can remember your dad as a person who made this kind of impact on complete strangers.

*With Love And Sympathy*  
*Adam Sheaffer*

I am writing this letter to tell you what a true blessing that our family experienced attending church services at University Baptist Church during our weekend stay at Waco, while visiting our son (Brad Baker) who is a freshman at Baylor University. From the moment we left Phoenix, Az and flew into Austin Tx we knew we were in for a great weekend. On Sunday morning, after all of the festivities of the weekend were drawing to a close, our son wanted us to attend church at UBC. He even picked us up at the hotel and drove us to church. He wanted us to arrive extra early ensuring that we got a good seat. Well we did. Being a parent and almost 50 years old I really was unsure who David Crowder was. Well my daughter and wife certainly knew who he was. I soon found out as well. His music and worship was awesome. As I was unsure of what was to happen next, we were introduced to Kyle Lake and were immediately blessed with his encouraging words for the students and parents attending the service. Kyle was truly awesome as well. Still being a little lonesome for our son not being close by, and having to let him go and trust in the Lord, I immediately felt a strong presence of God during the sermon that our son was truly at the right place. Being influenced with people like Kyle and David is so reassuring for me as a parent and the

privilege to attend Baylor is again a blessing. We are so sorry to hear about Kyle and what happened and are so grateful that we had an opportunity to meet Kyle and attend his church. Please be strong and trust in the Lord about what the future holds for your church. I am sure many people will be saved as a result of his witness. We will be praying for Kyle's family as well as they endure the next couple of months without him. Know that you have many people at North Phoenix Baptist Church that are praying also. We look forward to our next visit to Waco and the opportunity to attend church at UBC.

*Stan Sharon and Lauren Baker*

### Loving Memories of Kyle Lake

I met Kyle September 1999, my freshman year at Baylor. At that time, I was so busy following the rules of my Christian background that I became overloaded with feelings of despair and frustration. During the fall of 2000, Kyle became my mentor for a ministry class at Baylor. We met once a week that semester, and every week, the layers of guilt that I carried began to fall away. I realized that I really am free in Christ, and I felt renewed. It was so exciting to be around Kyle! I was reminded that God's love is unconditional and that my value system needs to be centered in who I am in Christ. I am so thankful Kyle gave me a chance and didn't judge me for being so judgmental. He was so patient and understanding. A fire was sparked in me, and I will be ever grateful to Kyle for seeing the best in me... I am closer to God having known Kyle Lake.

Kyle performed Mike and my wedding vows on February 22, 2003. He was extremely reserved compared to his usual norm that night. At our wedding, he followed the philosophy, "When in Rome..." The Rome he entered that night was a very traditional southern Baptist church. At one point he leaned around Mike and said, "Um... can I get an amen" to the audience. Although the crowd (except for the UBCers who came) thought this was a very normal church address, the three thought it was hilarious.

After a heartfelt address to the two of us, it was now time for "the kiss." I think everyone dreams of this moment their entire lives, and honestly, most people are probably totally mortified (the two of us had practiced over and over again- not too much, but not a peck either). As you all know, Kyle has been known for embracing wonderfully awkward moments. He spoke what sounded like the final sentence and then gave a silent pause, Mike took the cue and made his move thinking it was finally time, and right when he leaned toward me Kyle interjected a perfectly calculated new sentence... I just don't think he could pass it up. As he sparkled that mischievous grin that we all love so dearly he said, "Amen... Mike you may kiss your bride..."

We love your entire family and the extension of love, time, and encouragement you all have bestowed upon us. We will pray for you always as you will always remain so close to our hearts. Avery, Jude, and Sutton, we wish for you to embrace the teachings of Christ through the insightful lens of your father. He was the wisest man we have ever known. Your footprints will be on our hearts forever because you three are the legacy of such a sincere and genuine follower of Christ. Jen, you are so faithful, gentle, and true. We admire you deeply. The picture of my father and me walking down the aisle in my wedding captured you in the audience. When I saw the picture I thought, "There is no sweeter person I would want to be showing support for Mike and me on that day than Jennifer Lake." Every time I look and cherish that photo, I will be remembering your steadfast love for all of the community at our church, University Baptist. We love you always!

*Melissa Pond*

It has been a little over a week since we learned of Kyle's tragic accident and his family has been in our prayers continuously. We have asked our church, The Life Church in Surprise, Arizona, to also lift his family up in prayer at this difficult time.

I am not sure how to begin explaining how Kyle Lake has touched our family's life but I'll just dive right in:

In May 2002, my husband and I had driven from upstate New York to Waco, Texas to pick up our youngest daughter, Jessica, from Baylor. (she had just completed her freshman year and had been attending UBC.) Kyle delivered an awesome sermon on May 12, 2002 and afterwards, I went up to him to thank him for it, that God was totally speaking to me through him.

On July 9, 2003, I wrote to Kyle as I was reflecting upon God's greatness as well as a testimony as to what God had done and was doing in our lives. Here is an excerpt of the email that pertains to Kyle:

"I wanted to write and let you know that I kept the folder on your sermon of May 12, 2003, in which you preached on Ruth (Chapter 3:1-4:22). My husband and I attended UBC with our daughter, Jessica, who was just finishing her freshman year. You spoke about Ruth and how she followed Naomi. You told how Ruth's life was really falling apart and that her situation was liminal, which translates to threshold or in-between, a state of flux. You said that when God allows a person to be in that state-----well, that's when some very sacred things happen!!!!!! Ironically when we are in that state of flux, we often kick and scream and ask God to take us out of that liminal state! Well, back in May 2002, I was doing some serious kicking and screaming and had been for about 9 months.

I just wanted to write and let you know what an impact your sermon had on us last year.....and I keep the folder from UBC from May 12, 2002 as a reminder of what you taught that day and also as a testament to what God has done and continues to do for us! Our greetings and blessings to the congregation at UBC...we were moved and touched by so many young people praising and worshipping the Lord!!!

God bless you, In Christ, Debbi Steinberg"

This was my email to Kyle, and I know he wrote back but, sadly enough, I didn't keep the reply. I did, however, keep other emails he sent.....to give you a little history of how Kyle, once again, touched our lives.....later on in the year 2003, we had moved to Litchfield Park, Arizona and our daughter encountered some health issues. Jessi was taken to Providence Baptist Hospital in Waco on September 23rd, and the doctors did a CT scan and checked for meningitis as well as a brain aneurysm.

The next day, I received a call from the ER doctor and he told me that the CT scan results were sent to Houston for the radiologist to read there. He said that abnormalities were found and that there was a spot found but he didn't think it was a tumor but rather, plaque from migraines or MS. On September 25th, 2003, Jessi had to go back to Providence for an MRI at 4 pm. I had sent out prayer requests to everyone, including Kyle. He called Jessi at her dorm and arranged to meet her at Providence so that she wouldn't be alone. He prayed for her before going in and also sat and waited until she came out. How can a mother's heart ever express what it means to have someone step in and comfort her child when she can't be with her during a difficult time? These are two of Kyle's emails that he sent to us:

"September 24, 2003, 939pm, US Mountain Standard Time

"Chip and Debbi

Thanks for filling me in on this...I just got both of your emails and glad to hear the test results came back negative!

Could I give you my phone # at the church, so if this were ever to come up again, I could try and be a support for her at the hospital? The number is 254-752-1401. Also, I check my kylake@msn.com address more regularly than I do this ubc account so feel free to send to that one as well.

I'll be praying for Jessi.  
Kyle"

On October 1, 2003, I sent an update to a lot of people, including Kyle and he responded "Hey Debbi,

I got your voice mail and you bet. I know this time has been tough on you and Chip living at such a distance. I can't imagine the anxiety your guys are feeling at times with no outlet to hug (the outlet being Jess that is). Hang in there!! I've been getting updates from Jess as well but I sure appreciate yours. Thanks again.

Kyle Lake"

Kyle Lake was very dear to our hearts and to Jessi's.....we are all mourning his shortened life, but he truly blazed bright while on this earth, and we know that he is with Jesus.....My husband, daughter and I want Kyle's wife and children to know that Kyle touched us, not only with his sermons, but with his life. He took the time out of his schedule and life to go to Providence Hospital in Waco and be with our daughter and the friends who brought her to the hospital so he could pray for her before she had the MRI and to be there when she came out... he called her on the phone to check on her... he gave of himself and his time, just like Jesus.

May God, the great Comforter, pour out His love, comfort and peace to Kyle's beloved family.

*In Christ*

*Chip & Debbi Steinberg*

I never knew who Kyle was. I've never met Kyle. I've never heard Kyle speak before. And it was hard to mainly because of my location being in Michigan. But even in all this, I did know Kyle because he greatly has impacted a friend of mine who would embody Kyle's heart as this friend of mine travels and does what he does.

Not to mention just how UBC has been an influence on me as far as my understanding of what church REALLY is about. And it's evident in how they interact as a community and it's no far cry from the fact that they had a leader and a pastor that truly embodied what he preached and taught and did as far as being a believer in Christ and existing to manifest such character. It has greatly impacted my view of what church really is about and to embrace such a lifestyle was certainly what has shaped me to be what and who I am today. Of which, I am thankful to God for allowing such a guy to exist even in such a short time. To be the type of guy that would exuberantly embody such a divine character and a directed sense of leadership to display what Scripture defines as community, character, integrity, wisdom, and love and then learning that through the influence of another enriches and will always continue to enrich me. He wasn't just a pastor, he was a friend.... of whom i will never know, but could care less because now i do know him.

*Eugene Shin*

Just want Kyle's children to know that there is not another person in this world that has had an affect on as many people as their dad!

I also want them to know how much I appreciate their dad for loving our son through the time he wasn't sure there was a God. At a time when I was heart broken because my son who had grown up loving God, journaling to God, praying to God and studying the Bible, wasn't sure that there was a God. I want them to know that their dad was a young man that took the time to sit down with our son once a week for an entire semester of his sophomore year at Baylor to answer questions and to love him through his questions. He was never judgmental. Their dad was a young man that even took the time to call us to let us what was going on in our son's mind because he said that if our son was his son, that he'd want to know. I have never known anyone with so much passion for others in any walk of life with such a keen desire to make sure every person that he came in contact with knew and loved his Lord. I want Kyle and Jen's kids to know how blessed they are to have their blood running in their veins!

*Katy Reynolds*

Dear Kids,

My name is Heather. I attended Baylor from 2000-2004. I wanted to write to tell you what an impact your dad has made on my life. First, let me say that, to this day, he was the coolest pastor i've ever met, and one of the most passionate, compassionate, fun, and eloquent people I've ever known. He had a way of truly communicating with people in a way that made them feel loved and remembered. He had style - the coolest hair, way of dressing and manner. I know those things sounds silly, but I remember and loved these qualities. He seemed to relate to everyone, and he was the kind of pastor that made you miss him and his church every Sunday after you left Baylor. Most importantly, he loved the Lord, and was committed to sharing his Word in a dynamic, relevant style.

My senior year at Baylor I was engaged, and after my fiancée moved down from Pennsylvania, your dad did our pre-marital counseling. We truly looked forward to each time we met with him, because of the wisdom he provided, but also just because he was such a fun person. we met at starbucks, and your dad would tell us about his enagement and married experiences, and we would just talk about God and life. He loved your mom so much, and set such a great example of Christian leadership for my husband. We are so grateful to have had that special time with him, and will never forget it.

Another special memory i have of your dad was during one of the Sunday services. He was talking about childish wonder and how much he saw that in y'all, and how he had played the Coldplay concert dvd for you. Then he brought you twins in and played "Yellow", with all these cool lights re-creating how they do them at the Coldplay concert. You danced around on the stage, and we all were just so blown away by the love that your dad had for you. His love for you three was so evident in everything he did.

My heart is so saddened by this news, but I just wanted to take a minute to tell you how much I respected and appreciated your dad. He was a great, great man, and i know that his life touched so many. I know that he must be looking down on you now, so proud of the people that you are becoming. My prayers are with y'all.

*heather harrison keenan*

Roman Orosco and I played soccer with Kyle at Baylor. He made enough of an impact that both Roman and I, who had not seen or talked to Kyle in 8 years + came to the funeral to pay our respects. I think about him, his wife, and his children every day.

*Drew Wedemeyer*

Kyle had such a fun-loving spirit. He would truly find joy in so many different things in life. I remember one time I saw him, and he said "Hey Mike" to greet me. Just for fun I responded to him by saying "Salutations, Kyle." He thought it was the funniest thing! So for the next several weeks, whenever I saw Kyle he would greet me with "Salutations!" and then he'd have a good laugh. It was these little things that I'll remember and hold on to about Kyle. Those memories are teaching me to find joy in the people that are around me, even in the silly little conversations we have.

Kyle stands as one of the few people who have influenced my life in a profound way. From our conversations together, I have learned to be gentle and understanding to others that think differently than I do. I have learned to always be seeking our amazing God in a genuine way. I thank God that he put Kyle Lake in my life.

*Mike Pond*

I met my dear friend and pastor Kyle during my junior year at Baylor. During the previous two years I had been church hopping and having a difficult time deciding on a church home. I had attended UBC many times and for some reason I kept coming back. That's when I met Kyle. He invited me to join in a bible study with him and a few others. I knew that the best way to find a church home was to get involved and see if it's a fit, so I said yes. During those afternoons together I got to know "Pastor Kyle," to see his heart for the Lord, for people, for ministry, and for UBC. I was drawn to his passion, his love of people, his kindness and joy...not to mention that sly smile and devious laugh! He had a contagious love for life! I knew then that I wanted to be a part of Kyle's vision--the Lord's vision for a new and unique church. I joined the inner city youth ministry team. I hung out with students from around Waco--students that would impact my life in a way I could not imagine. I joined the church leadership team. We had a blast together, serving and playing together. We'd play volleyball with Kyle, David, and other leaders at the Fiji house on Baylor's campus. I'll always remember the way Kyle and David kept us laughing on the court despite their lack of volleyball skills! He was always fun to be around!

Kyle's smile was so inviting. His leadership style was one of humility and openness. He built into other leaders and encouraged them by allowing them to experiment with their own leadership styles and qualities. Kyle did this for me. When he would teach, it was like sitting around with your family—a large family—in the living room talking about God. Kyle loved people. Not to criticize, but some head pastors are too big or too busy to get to know the church members...but not Kyle. He was personal. He wanted to know me, to know others, to be a part of our lives. He was gentle and respectful. He treated everyone equally, never judging. He welcomed everyone with that same genuine smile. People were drawn to him. He wasn't concerned with numbers or perfect sermons. He was concerned with student's lives and spiritual walks. He was so filled with God's good love that all he wanted to do was share that with everyone he met.

I learned so much from Kyle. I learned how to love others unconditionally and to live life to the fullest. I only wish I put those two things into practice every day.

I moved to California after I graduated, so the times I've been able to visit UBC since have been few and far between, but I always looked forward to Kyle's smile and his warm, brotherly hug. I look forward to seeing that smile again one day, as I know we all do. Kyle, thank you for sharing your life with me, and for forever touching mine. We miss you and we love you. And for the Lake family, you will always remain in my thoughts and prayers. I love you all!

*With love*

*Lindsey (Freer) Syres*

Baylor Graduate 2001

I was able to attend this year's opening service with hopes that my daughter would attend—unfortunately she has left Baylor, but my memory of Kyle and UBC will be lasting. I remember in his sermon, he referenced his purchase of the family mini-van and as a parent it had brought back so many of my own funny “mini van” stories, that I was able to visualize the joy he had as a father and husband. It has really touched my heart to have this man so filled with the love of God and the ability to share that love to the students at Baylor no longer here on earth. I know he is in heaven, great is his reward... but it reminds me of such a loss for those of us who remain... And because of the tragedy I feel an extra urgency that God is speaking to us in such a big way!

My prayers are with Kyle's wife, children, parents, family, church and community—prayers of comfort and of God's mercy!

*Karen Zimmerman*      Seattle WA

As the young wife of a church planter with three children also, the news of Kyle's accidental death Sunday has had a big impact on me. Although we do not know the Lake family, we grieve with them during this dark time of loss, as well as rejoice with them knowing that Kyle is home with Christ.

I wanted to tell you that I will pray for Kyle's funeral service today. I will be praying that God will use the service to bring comfort to all who loved Kyle, that it will truly be a celebration of the years God blessed Kyle with here, and that God will bestow salvation to those He chooses through the service. God used the memorial service following the sudden, accidental death of a Christian friend to bring salvation to my entire family when I was a little girl. I have never considered my family's salvation the reason that God called my friend home, but I thank God for His blessing even in the midst of that dark valley. May His blessing be upon Kyle's service today and may His name be glorified mightily by the coming together of the saints to remember Kyle Lake.

*Under the Mercy*

*Cheryl Williamson*  
(from Washington state)

Kyle Lake's witness and his life influenced so many... I'm a KSBJ listener so have indirectly been touched by Mr. Lake through David Crowder's music. Our love and prayers to his wife and children during this difficult time...

*Sincerely*

*Laura Gomez*

Live Life to the fullest & love God—this describes the life of Kyle Lake. He is a picture of John 10:10. He touched our lives deeply: as parents of children at Baylor and UBC, as parents reeling from the loss of our 16 year old daughter we found a refuge at UBC in the worship and teaching. The last time we were with Kyle, He wanted us to see how his children had grown. He rounded them all up for us to see, with such love and pride on his face. He handed me a piece of paper with their names on it so i could make something for them. He always took the time to love his family and love the people around him. The love of God was a shining light in his eyes. His legacy is forever and huge and amazing. His teaching will forever impact us all. His love will follow us into eternity. His family can rest in his love for them, and know that he is waiting for them. We grieve with hope and wait with hope. We miss and honor Kyle and cannot wait to see him soon.

*In Jesus and the love of God Janet Herbert*

Like so many others that Kyle has touched, I was drawn to his "approachability". He was authentic and open but still strived to seek what God wanted. My time at Baylor was as much about the football games, classes, and other traditions as it was about UBC, Kyle, Dave and others. I still vividly recall the video Dave and Kyle put together showing Kyle "practicing" his sermon to the menagerie of stuffed animals sitting around Crowder on those wonderful rust orange pews. My love of C.S. Lewis and many theologians came out of his influence and the small groups he lead. The person that Kyle was and how he influenced others is still a very real part of who I am now just as much as it was back when I was attending UBC.

*Shannon Berendes*

Baylor '00 (attended UBC '97-'00)

This is so hard to try and put on paper what Kyle meant to me. So many thoughts, so many emotions, so much sadness... i miss him sooooo much. I think I have known him since my birth.... well at least as long as I can remember, he has been a brother to me. Kyle was/is the "coolest christian" that I have ever known. He had this amazing ability to share his love and the love of God with even those who thought they didn't want it... how could you not want to hear what he had to say... how could you not want to have "whatever" he had... his joy, the joy of God was overflowing onto EVERYONE who crossed his path.

The entire time I knew Kyle, he was happy. smiling, hugging. laughing...how can one person be so beautiful both inside and out? He was who we all looked up to in our youth group... he was that example that you only hope that all children have to model their own selves after. He made Christianity the thing to do... and you could be yourself doing it, and still be the coolest guy/girl in school. Kyle NEVER went anywhere in life without leaving his footprints.

Kyle was instrumental in my upbringing and a large part of who I am both personally and spiritually. I would constantly compare myself to him... what advice would KYLE give me. I knew that no matter the situation, Kyle would understand and not make me feel like a total failure. He always knew how to make it better... how can one person always know what to say? He did... he was blessed... if I would have only known.

He not only was prevalent in my life but also the lives of my entire family, especially my brothers. I don't think any of us will ever be the same, but we will be better people. U hear about these kind of things, but until it happens to you... death changes people, but for me, a believer, it changed me for the better. Our separation is just temporary, we will meet again, could be sooner, could be later... we truly do not know... if he will take Kyle this way... we all better be ready!!!! <grins,grins>

The air I breathe is different, because I "cherish" ever breath of it, but with that same breath I must get up and go... go to be like Kyle and live for Jesus....to share with others the joy that Jesus can bring... and from watching Kyle my whole life, there are no specific ways in which to do that, just do it and do it well!!!! I pray that I can bring Joy to people like Kyle did.

I will forever love you, Kyle. Thank you so much for being who you were. Here or not, your impact will forever be with me and will carry on into my children and their children and so on. I can see you smiling in Heaven waiting for us there. Until we meet again...

*Amanda Smithson*

Austin, Texas (home town: Tyler, Texas)

I knew Kyle since I was about 8 or 9 years old. We played soccer in Tyler together as kids. We were never "running around buddies", but he was a teammate. Kyle was an excellent athlete and after high school, I knew he was involved with a church in Waco and we lost touch of each other. He was an incredible person and he will be missed by all. He was warm, friendly, and I hope his family is well.

*Adam Q Rauck MEd*

Manor Elementary School P.E. Teacher

Manor High School Boy's Varsity Soccer Coach

Even before I moved from Dallas to Waco to start school at Baylor, I knew about UBC. It had just started, and I don't even know where it was meeting. But I knew there was something different about it. And I remember hearing about the transition – when Chris and Robbie Seay left and there was some anxiety about who would lead the church. Throughout my 7 years in Waco, I heard stories about Kyle Lake - who stepped in and stepped up and the church kept growing. I never attended UBC, though I visited a few times. It was through the people that Kyle touched that I knew of him. As a Truett Seminary student, I saw the changes in the people who listened to his sermons each week, who led Sunday school and worked with him on the leadership team. These people respected him as a leader, though he did not lead by force, but through teamwork.

Jesus once told his disciple, Peter, "If you love me, then feed my sheep." It is evident that Kyle Lake loved Jesus, because the sheep around him were well fed.

*In peace*  
*Rachel Hunt Hill*

How can you describe a man you admired, but did not know very well?

You can see him as a role model, fellow Baylor alum, a man of the gospel, and most importantly, a friend. Some see him as a father, a husband, and a son as well as a pastor.

Who is Kyle Lake? He is the man who gave all of his life to God, even to his dying day. That is devotion, love. There is comfort in the fact that Kyle is now in Heaven. God called this wonderful man to preach with Him. I'm sure he's looking down and smiling upon each one of us, touching our lives in small ways, just as he did on earth. I can imagine him saying, "Don't worry y'all, I'll be here waiting for you." His Christian message promised us a reunion. I trust that promise wholeheartedly, and will live my life as a memorial to his name.

*Kristen Ford*

My name is Chris Adams. I am a PhD student at Fuller Seminary. I am a close friend and former roommate of Kyle's brother-in-law, Scott Gornto. I met Kyle on several occasions both in Southern California and at various Gornto family gatherings, including Scott's wedding. I am deeply saddened for his family and your church community at the tragic loss of such a wonderful pastor, father, and friend. Kyle is one of those people that you don't forget when you meet him. He just had a way about him – a way of being fun-loving, and yet profoundly deep... a way of being present and validating to individual people, and yet a way of including everyone – he had a kind of compassionate charisma that was not proud, and yet made you want to be friends with him. It was also obvious in my limited interaction with Kyle how much he loved his family and friends. He was a Christ-like man, and I am a better person for having met him. May the God of all comfort be with you all as you remember, grieve, and honor Christ by honoring Kyle's memory.

*Chris Adams*

Brother Lake was one of the most solid men I have known in my life. He was an example to me and the way I should try and live my life. Although we were not close in recent years, Brother Lake left his footprint in my life. I can remember the hugs he gave me and the smiles he wore each day (what an inviting smile!). He exuded joy and fulfillment. It goes without stating that his life was filled with the love of Christ and the joy Brother Lake exuded was one of many qualities from Christ's light shining through him. If there is one word I could use to describe this wonderful man it would be: "Touch". He had a distinctive manner which moved others emotionally. Although his touch will be missed, I know in my heart that his touch will continue to be shared and experienced. God Bless You, Kyle Lake. You Are Loved and Will Forever Be In Our Hearts!

*Blake Richter*

I grew up at First Baptist Tyler with the Lake family, and I will never forget Kyle teaching the first Bible Study lesson I ever heard in the youth group. It was entitled, "How to Make Your Leg Look Like a Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich." Only Kyle could take a title like that and teach a group of 7th graders something we really needed to hear. My best friend Mandi (Hennig) and I have laughed countless times as we remembered that first lesson, our introduction to the youth ministry at FBC. Perhaps part of it is the crazy title, but more importantly, we've never forgotten the impact Kyle had on us as young students. He just had an easy way of drawing us in and making us excited about the lesson. Now that I teach 7th grade Sunday School, this story has kept coming back to me over and over again and has continued to challenge me to make the same impact on my students that he did on all of us.

I'll also never forget coming to Baylor as a freshman in the fall of 1996 and bumping into Kyle in Jones Library. I was trying to do research for a chemistry paper, and I was totally confused and lost when I walked around the corner and ran into Kyle. He was working pretty hard on a seminary paper, but he took time to stop and help me, to ask me about life and school, and of course, to make me laugh by offering to give me his "expert" opinion on the topic I was researching.

Kyle had an incredible sense of humor and a joy that was contagious, and I always looked up to him. I can't believe I never got the opportunity to tell Kyle what an impact his life made on mine, but I do know this... My story is just a very small part of the book that will be written about his life and how it was used to impact so many for God's Kingdom. May God be praised for his life and ministry!

*Brittney (Partridge) Hood*

Kyle, your authenticity spoke worlds to me. The way you carried yourself, with such peace, such understanding, was a comfort to even the strangers like myself. Your raw passion and care was translated by so many more than you know. Thank You.

*Evan Rosell*

After the first time I went to UBC and heard Kyle speak, I knew church could be different and more than I had previously thought it could be. It was during that time that my southern Baptist roots were challenged and that the legalism in my life was questioned. I started realizing that God wanted conversation with me and not just a checklist of when I went to church and when I didn't.

A great memory of Kyle was when he took his twins onstage at church one Sunday morning in January 2004. There was a Coldplay song/video playing on the screen and Kyle had his sons come up and dance with him to the song. Kyle talked about his love for his children and he even got choked up when he realized how fast they were growing. It was touching and a wonderful way to remember Kyle.

*Sincerely*

*Laura Brownstein*

Second Grade Teacher, Countryside Elementary School

I live in Austin, Texas; therefore I never knew Kyle - but my heart and spirit aches for his lovely wife and his precious children. I witness in my spirit that Kyle was a Christ-Like man, living his faith in Jesus and helping others around him openly.

My prayers are with you, his family; I know the legacy of Christ that Kyle leaves will always protect and guide you, and his children, as you continue on with your lives here on earth. I also know that Jesus is walking hand in hand with all of you, friends, family, and congregation alike; He knows your pain and heartache because He experienced it firsthand when he walked among the people His Father created here on earth.

*God's blessings upon you always*

*Pearl L Lee*

Hi, my name is Shawn Boyd, I live in Amarillo and go to First Baptist Church. My times with Kyle weren't many. Yet I still cherish every time we did have together. People always say during a loss to think about the good memories.. with Kyle, it's easy. That's all I have of him.

I met Kyle at my church's camp, "Breakaway". He was the pastor for the week. His lessons for the week were about friendship. I feel he definitely had a grasp on what being a friend was. He was incredible, he was down to earth, played soccer (my favorite sport), had a wife, kids, was a pastor at his own church. This guy, in my eyes, had everything a guy could want. He could be friends with anybody in the world, and you wouldn't have someone push away his friendship. All of these things and he still gave me his time to laugh at my jokes and give me encouragement.

I had only known this man for a few days, and he had already started to influence my life. Camp ended, and we exchanged emails and parted ways. I returned to Amarillo and I just had to stay in contact with this guy. He was on fire! It just seemed that his interpretation, his very thought process, made sense to me. I had lost his email address so I "googled" his name and I not only found his email address but I found out that he had written a book. I, of course, bummed some cash from my mom so I could buy it. I recently read his book Understanding God's Will. First off, it's an amazing book just to read. Yet to be able to email the author and further discuss concepts with him is just a tremendous opportunity. I also emailed him about struggles in my life, and he would talk to me about them and not offer advice but just be a person to listen and be real. To find a friend like that is close to impossible. And for me to just lay it all down for a guy I knew for about a week, just truly shows how amazing he was and how easily it was to become his friend.

Kyle Lake always had something to do and he was still a good enough friend to email back some kid from a church camp. When I had reached about the middle of his book, me and my girlfriend split up. She was probably the best girlfriend and even relationship I had ever had. I emailed Kyle and told him, and his advice and his encouragement through the breakup was amazing. I think I would have fallen away from the Lord had he not been there. A man of experience and a man that can listen. I know a breakup isn't much to get upset over but it was probably the biggest loss I had ever had, and he walked me through it. I feel like he really loved and cared about me. He was a man that loved his family (he referred to them in every sermon at camp), his work, and just people in general.

I love Kyle Lake, and he has greatly influenced my life in just the short time I knew him, I can't imagine what it would have been like to know him even better. The Lake family is in my prayers, and I pray that they won't hesitate to ask anything of me. For I would love to help and love on the family of that man that helped and loved on me.

*Love Shawn Boyd*

I did not know Kyle Lake, but his passing has touched my life to the point that I wish I had known him. I am also a Baylor Graduate and I wish that University Baptist Church had been around when I was going to college, back in the 80's. My husband and I have a deep love for the contemporary church and worship and we know that University Baptist has made a great impact on Waco and the students at Baylor. We will pray for this church and for Kyle's family. I have 2 young children of my own, so my heart really goes out to these precious children. God has all things in HIS mighty plan and we must continue to put our faith and trust in HIM that all is well and good in HIS eyes.

*May God bless the people of University Baptist Church and the Lake family*

*Ralph Laurie Hannah and Caleb Duke*

Palacios, Texas

I did not know Kyle until this morning. Dave Crowder band posted a message on their "my space" site. After some searching I found out so much more. Relevant Online has a special section dedicated to your beloved pastor, husband, father, and friend.

My prayers go out to everyone at this time of sorrow. When my little daughter died at the age of 3, the only thing that kept me going was knowing she is not sad or in pain. She is happy with her Jesus! I am the one who is heart-stricken. I picture Jesus with one arm around my Amanda and His other arm around her mother.

*God Bless*  
*Kathy Larsen Hughes*  
Oskaloosa, IA

I don't regularly attend UBC but have several times in the past...and even after these few times I can clearly see that Kyle Lake was a strong man of God. I remember one specific message he gave about faith that really touched me. You could see the passion and true love he had for his Savior in the way he preached. I truly respect and admire the way that he lived out his faith for all to see...that alone spoke volumes to me. So although I only met him once, face to face, his strong faith and passion for the Lord still sticks out in my mind. He will be greatly missed on the Baylor campus for years to come.

For his children: Your father was an amazing man, and I know none of us will ever forget him. I know you are young and don't really understand why this happened. None of us do. I just want to leave you a verse: "'My thoughts are completely different from yours,' says the Lord. 'And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.'" - Isaiah 55:8

God knows what he is doing and although sometimes it is really, really hard for us to understand... just know that we don't have to. It is all in His hands and, as tough as this is and will be for a long time, know that nothing is too big for our God. That is what your dad believed... and it is what he would want for his children as well.

"For the word of the Lord holds true, and everything he does is worthy of our trust. He loves whatever is just and good, and His unfailing love fills the earth"

Psalms 33:4-5 (NLT)

*Kate Cockcroft*

Words seem so ineffective at a time of personal tragedies such as you are experiencing. The one thing that stands out in my mind is to offer encouragement in your time of utter grief. As a mother of boys, I can only imagine what emotions flood you at this time and in the days to come. When praying for your family, I have been constantly reminded of the tremendous legacy Kyle has left for his children. All parents dream of success for their children. I truly believe that your Kyle found success. From what I have learned about him, he was a source of inspiration to nearly everyone in his path. It seems that he learned the secret early in his life that time is precious and life is short. I think he began long before his time as an adult or minister building his legacy. Music is such a source of encouragement for me. I am reminded of the popular Contemporary Christian song, by Mercy Me, "In the Blink of an Eye". I hope you can find your Kyle in the words of this song. May you be comforted in knowing he lived his "dash" to the fullest and made it count for the cause of Christ. Because of him, many will live forever with Christ. Even in his death, there will be those who turn to his Christ for their salvation. My prayers are with each of you.

"In The Blink of an Eye" by Mercy Me  
You put me here for a reason You have a mission for me  
You knew my name and You called it Long before I learned to breathe

Sometimes I feel disappointed By the way I spend my time  
How can I further Your kingdom When I'm so wrapped up in mine

And though I'm living a good life Can my life be something great?  
I have to answer the question Before it's too late

Cause in a Blink of an eye that is when I'll be closer to You than I've ever been  
Time will fly, but until then I'll embrace every moment I'm given  
There's a reason I'm alive for a blink of an eye

If I give the very best of me That becomes my legacy  
So tell me what am I waiting for? What am I waiting for?

In a Blink of an eye that is when I'll be closer to You than I've ever been  
Time will fly, but until then I'll embrace every moment I'm given

In a Blink of an eye that is when I'll be closer to You than I've ever been  
Time will fly, but until then I'll embrace every moment I'm given  
There's a reason I'm alive for a blink of an eye

*Yyuvone Childers*  
Whitehouse, TX

Dear Refuge Of My Weary Soul  
text: Anne Steele

1. Dear refuge of my weary soul,  
On Thee when sorrows rise  
On Thee when waves of trouble roll,  
My fainting hope relies  
To Thee I tell each rising grief,  
For Thou alone canst heal  
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief,  
For every pain I feel

2. But oh! When gloomy doubts prevail,  
I fear to call Thee mine  
The springs of comfort seem to fail,  
And all my hopes decline  
Yet gracious God where shall I flee?  
Thou art my only trust  
And still my soul would cleave to Thee  
Though prostrate in the dust

3. Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face,  
And shall I seek in vain?  
And can the ear of sovereign grace,  
Be deaf when I complain?  
No still the ear of sovereign grace,  
Attends the mourner's prayer  
Oh may I ever find access,  
To breathe my sorrows there

4. Thy mercy seat is open still,  
Here let my soul retreat  
With humble hope attend Thy will,  
And wait beneath Thy feet  
Thy mercy seat is open still,  
Here let my soul retreat  
With humble hope attend Thy will,  
And wait beneath Thy feet  
\*(hymn sent by Velvet Noel)

I had visited UBC only a few times. However, despite my wavering faith and overwhelming skepticism, Kyle's energy and love of Christ did nothing but assure me of Christ's love for me and each one of us. Somehow, I just knew that if Jesus could burn so strongly as he did in Kyle, then everything would turn out alright. Kyle was a beacon of light, and his charisma was overwhelming. Never did a better role model exist, for he was an amazing man.

*Matthew McLeod*

Our son grew up in a pastor's home. When he went to Baylor in 2001, he called home very excited about finding "his home church" at college. He was very impressed, but wanted our opinion so on our next vacation, we attended services at UBC. We were impressed and pleased at our son's choice, but I left skeptical (from being a pastor's wife so long). I needed to know how a college church was supported. I emailed Kyle, and I was impressed by his quick reply confirming that yes, in fact, this church was not a mission and was not supplemented any longer by the BGCT, but was supported almost totally by the tithes and offerings of college kids. WOW! What a ministry! I am so thankful Andrew had the privilege of being pastored by Kyle Lake.

*Sincerely Diane Crosby*

I will miss Kyle. As one is wont to do in these technologized times, I just went back through all my email exchanges with him -- he was such a wonderful and generous guy. Once I recommended him for a speaking gig, which he took and did a wonderful job at. A couple weeks later, I received a gift card for The Cheesecake Factory in the mail from him, along with a grace-filled thank you note. That blew me away -- I would never have thought of doing that.

I don't know if Relevant used it, since I haven't seen the book yet, but here's the endorsement I offered after reading the manuscript of Kyle's just-published book on prayer:

"When people who are attempting to follow Christ open up and get honest with one another, it's practically inevitable: they start talking about their frustration with prayer, their feelings of guilt at not praying enough or well enough, and their deep fears that maybe prayer doesn't really work after all. In other words, the last thing we need is another book on prayer that is full of platitudes and euphemisms. Thank God that Kyle has the ability to look at Christian prayer for what it really is: the maddening, beautiful, confounding, inept attempts of human beings to communicate with our Creator. This book is a gem. And one more thing, Kyle is one heckuva writer!"

One more thing: Kyle and I were supposed to go duck hunting on a trip arranged by Jason Mitchell in January. I wish I would have gotten that chance...

*Tony Jones*

My name is Morgan, I'm a music minister for our church in Georgetown TX...

I went to one of those worship together conferences and saw David Crowder as he did a New Song Cafe class for some of his songs. I was impressed, and when the CD party for Illuminate was held at UBC, I took my pastor.

We saw the church setup and loved it...we were about 15 years older than the average church member (36 and 38) and yet everyone we talked to, asked questions, etc...was full of the love of the Lord...we were very well received... the people were so REAL...The point of all this is that I, as well as others, came to see the David Crowder Band. We left knowing we had just been in a very well pastored church.

Our world is now a lesser place

*Thanks*

*From an outsider Morgan*

I attend First Baptist Church Amarillo and Kyle was our camp pastor this past summer in California. Going into this experience I thought it would be a camp just like any other, but it turned out it wasn't. Our lessons for the mornings during the week were about relationships in all aspects of the word. Our junior class at the time had always been really close, but from what we learned, we didn't really know how close we could be. We came back having learned so much from him, and I don't think we will ever be the same because of what he taught us. We have all learned to appreciate each other a lot more and have learned to work out our differences and stay friends through all of the difficult times. I know that I will never forget the lessons he taught us and that my lifestyle is different because of what he taught me. We, as a youth group, will always remember all of the fun times we had hanging out with Kyle and getting to know him. I don't know that I could ever put into words how much Kyle impacted my life, I just know that Kyle was an amazing person with a wonderful heart for God, and I am incredibly blessed to have ever met him.

*With love*

*Ali Foran*

I have never met Kyle, although I have read his books. My son attends Baylor University. Last year was his freshman year, and he had been having a very difficult time with the deaths of both my parents. He was very angry with God and had basically given up on his faith. He began attending UBC with some friends and slowly, but surely, began to come around and face his issues. I don't know if he ever really spoke with Kyle about the issues he was having, but I do know that Kyle renewed his faith. I was very relieved when he told me he was attending Church again and enjoying it. I thank Kyle for helping my son become right with his faith. He even began wearing his hair like Kyle's because Kyle told him it would make him look good. My son had nothing but praise for Kyle and spoke of what an awesome person he was.

*Thank You For Sharing Him With All*

*Cheryl Walters*

I was on AOL yesterday when I saw the story about Kyle. Being that I am a youth minister in my parish, I saw the story of Kyle and became overwhelmed with sadness and grief. As I read on, many things made me "feel" this loss even more. The fact that he was so young... only 33 years old, the fact that he was leaving a young wife, Jennifer, behind, and the fact that his three young children have been left without a father. But then, I began to feel such strength from Kyle, a person that I have never met. I felt the strength that must have led this 33 year old man to become a pastor at a church. I felt the strength that his family must have given him to support him in this role. I felt the strength of his Lord and Savior that will now give his family the strength to get through this. Kyle is a stranger to me... but his dedication to his faith, his family, his church, and his Lord are an inspiration to me. And, as I spend my days ministering to the middle school youth in Cary, NC, a part of Kyle's passion and dedication will be with me and inspiring me each day. Thank you, Kyle.

*Kim Dandurand*

Middle School Youth Minister

Director of The EDGE, St. Michael Catholic Church

Faithful  
Righteous

Open-hearted  
Invested

Optimistic  
Natural

Tolerant  
True

Passionate  
Sincere

*from Kathy Balthazar*

I first met Kyle when he was an interim youth minister at Columbus Ave. Baptist. My oldest daughter was sixteen years old at the time and was in need of a strong influence such as Kyle. I am forever grateful to him for the support he lent to my daughter and her friends. As my children aged, they often attended UBC and maintained a connection to Kyle. My wife and I attended church there several times just to experience what so many young people found in that setting. About a year ago, we arrived at the church early so we could visit a few minutes with Kyle. He took us to the church day care room where Jenn and their three children were - he wanted to show off his beautiful family. They were the love of his life. Since I have a twin brother, I was especially thrilled to meet his twins. Big sister was obviously in charge of her kid brothers!

When Kyle's book *Understanding God's Will* was first published I bought a copy and read it in one afternoon. I liked the "free association" writing style he used. As I read the words on the page I could hear Kyle's lively and energetic voice speaking. I took the chance to send him an email to thank him for being such a refreshing voice. Not many his age had the wisdom and understanding of theology he showed. For that matter, not many people considerably older had his wisdom and understanding. He was not afraid to question and encouraged individual expression.

I think a lot about life and death, not necessarily in a morbid way, but out of curiosity. I cannot grasp why tragedy hits people like Kyle - or anyone else for that matter. I don't comprehend what happens next and so maybe I am more afraid of death than need be. Maybe God will give me answers to all my "why" questions once I'm in heaven. Or maybe he will tell me I can't understand it all and so I will have to be content in not knowing. For whatever reason, I am comforted by the thought that God cries when things do not go according to his will. He is sad when people like Kyle show up in Heaven too early. He hurts when young mothers and little children are forced to move on with life in a way that is harsh and unintended. I don't like that these things happen, but I do like knowing that we all live within the realm of Love and Grace no matter what.

Jenn, Avery, Jude, and Sutton, please accept my profound sympathy over your loss. My prayer for you is that God's Love - as shown to you by your husband and father - will live forever in your hearts. My life is better because he crossed my path.

*Lee Carter*

The very first time I attended UBC, I learned a valuable lesson about Christianity from Pastor Kyle Lake. He taught that sharing Christ with others didn't have to be formulaic or pushy in any way. I learned that I can bring others to Christ through truly listening to others and through my lifestyle. I also fondly remember his jokes about the differences between hymns and modern worship songs - and told us that all were OK at UBC. He truly did embrace all sorts of ideas to accept people from a wide spectrum of places. He will be dearly remembered as a teacher of Christ's ways, and I pray for his family and his friends.

*Sincerely Amy Pho*

I just learned about Kyle's death and felt I needed to write. I remember playing at UBC in Waco with Sixpence a few years ago, and I vaguely remember meeting Kyle. I thought your church was the coolest idea for a meeting place that I'd seen in a long time.

It pains me to think that Kyle had to leave this world so soon. Anyway... I'm just rambling... but I'm just in a little bit of shock to think that God would allow something like this to happen! I also hope that the people who observed the event are doing okay... that's a pretty traumatic thing to have experienced I'm sure.

Well... I guess I don't have much more to say... just that I'm sorry, and I mourn his loss with you all. May God bless you, Kyle's family, and the congregation during this time of mourning...

*dale*

Dale Baker

My first memories of Kyle are from 1988. I was a 7th grader and he was a sophomore in high school. We both went to First Baptist Church in Tyler, TX. Kyle was the guy that all the boys my age looked up to. He was popular, drove a sweet black Pathfinder, and, despite his level of coolness, he treated the younger guys (like myself) with respect. On occasion he was like the big brother I never had.

Several years later, we met up again at Baylor. During my sophomore year, Kyle was instrumental in helping me choose and get into Kappa Sigma. During the spring semester he took time each week to go through a Neil Anderson book with me and advise me on my love life which had recently fallen to pieces.

After being gone for 6 years, I returned to Waco in 2002 and started attending UBC. It was wonderful to see the man that had been so influential in formidable years still working with young people and making an even greater impact on this world.

To me, Kyle has always been a role model, a counselor, a teacher, and most importantly, a good friend.

*John Peel*

### Kyle Lake's Footprints in My Life...

I came to Baylor sure of who I was and what I believed. My first semester shook me to my core. I saw Christianity at, what I believed was, its worst and was forced to question myself on whether or not my faith was something I still wanted to live for. Through finding UBC and Kyle Lake, my faith resurfaced, and I was once again revived in my beliefs.

UBC was something I had never experienced. It awakened a part of my faith that was dormant for quite some time. It gave life to my faith when my faith had been dead-or at least sleeping for a while.

The first sermon I remember being truly touched by was one that Kyle did about evangelism. That sermon was one I had needed to hear. Kyle had put into words what I had believed we should do as Christians-something that had been refuted by others. This sermon made me want to be a part of the UBC family. This church embraced beliefs and ideas of how to express them, that had brought me to the faith in the beginning. Sadly, that sermon was towards the end of the semester, and I was preparing to go home for the summer.

I wasn't able to truly connect to the church until the next fall. Kyle shocked me again with his words, his passion for God, and his love. His appreciation for beauty in the little things astounded me. These things are things that most people just glance over or don't even notice. Yet Kyle noticed them and embraced them every single day. Kyle's words had a way of making me truly excited about my faith and helped me again to appreciate and see God in people, places, and nature, where God resides on earth. Kyle helped me find God in the world, and how to see the beauty for what He does here. Too many people focus on what is to come-on Heaven-when we have to notice what we have now. What makes this life wonderful and beautiful? Kyle knew how to find that.

During that semester, UBC had a fall retreat. I figured this would be a good way to get my foot in the door and really meet people at UBC. The retreat was absolutely wonderful. It helped me with my own struggles with my one-on-one faith. I had been living my faith through the community and not through myself. My journaling and scripture readings have not been the same since.

Sadly, I found that Baylor was not the place for me and that next semester I transferred to Texas Tech, but my spirituality will never be the same. Kyle and UBC showed me how to live my faith and how to embrace others who were not necessarily a part of it. Kyle was one-in-a-million. Here at Tech, I have been unable to find the same thing I received from Kyle's words, so I still listen to his sermons. I cannot express to you how much Kyle and UBC meant to me and meant to my journey. Even though I was never really a part of the congregation, whenever I come back to visit UBC, it still feels like home. It is a safe place for me to express my faith and myself. There were many reasons why I couldn't stay at Baylor, but other than my closest friends there, UBC is what I miss the most.

Kyle touched people. Period. I had friends come from home, people not even of the faith, who were blown away with what he had to say. What other churches are you going to be able to get a sermon on God in the Music-Arcade Fire, or God in the Movies-In America. He saw God through these things, something that a lot of Christians would not even notice. He showed people how to live, day in and day out, appreciating life and loving God and seeing Him in reality, not just in text or in the abstract. No matter if you had been going to UBC for years or just visited once, you were touched by God through Kyle Lake. My prayers and thoughts are with you all.

*With much love*  
*Allison Pearce*

Although I did not have the privilege of personally knowing Kyle, I feel as though he was my friend. Kyle Lake has been a cherished friend to my sister's family for many years. Jennifer (my sister) and Jon Smithson are from Tyler, Texas. Their children ~Samantha, Amanda, Austin, and Stewart~ had the honor of growing up with Kyle and his family. Kyle had a huge impact on each of their lives. I cannot begin to count the number of times I have heard them speak about Kyle Lake. His walk with God was a testimony to each of them. A few specific things I recall them saying over the years are how Kyle was always there for them...a friend through the valleys and the mountains of life. He was a prayer warrior for them and with them. He was an example on how to live the way God would want us to live. My sister once told me about Kyle wearing a gold band to represent "true love waits" on his little finger and giving it to his wife on their wedding day. Samantha always talked about how his smile would brighten anyone's day. Stewart, a freshman at Baylor this year, was having a difficult time adjusting to leaving home, and Kyle was the person he turned to. Kyle was there... his words made the positive difference that Stewart needed.

I live in Waco, and was on my way to Tyler the morning Kyle died. I received a phone call on the road. My heart sank when I heard the news. I was only minutes from my sister's home and I knew that I would be the one to tell Jennifer and her family about Kyle's death. I will never forget their eyes as I told them about Kyle... their friend who they loved so very much. Samantha ran to the phone to call Jordan and Blair Browning hoping the news was not true. Her tears said it all. This day is forever sketched in my mind.

Kyle Lake made a difference to six people who I love so deeply... but, he also made a difference to me... and I did not personally know him. Heaven received a great gift on October 30, 2005... his words, his life will live in us all. Thank you, God, for giving us Kyle Lake.

*Most sincerely*  
*Holley Walsh*

Where to start? Ten years ago, I interned under Kyle at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church. I'm so grateful that Kyle gave me a chance to work with him there - and I'm thankful for the friendship that opportunity began. In the ten years that followed, I have had the privilege of knowing Kyle as a fellow staff member, as my pastor, and as my friend. Kyle always did have an amazing joy and was a joy to work with. Rebecca and I felt truly blessed to begin our married life as a part of University Baptist Church with Kyle as our pastor.

I've done a lot of reflecting in the past month and a half. Kyle's death shook me hard. I've already been wanting to spend time contemplating things - this has been a big year for me. Rebecca and I had our first child, we celebrated 5 years of marriage, and I turned 30 - a lot for one year! Then this with Kyle. This really has shaken my faith. I believe as strongly in God and my relationship with Him now as I did before October 30. At the same time, I don't nearly have all the answers. Why would God do this? I don't know. I don't even have a clue! Even making a guess would trivialize this.

I still can't believe it. There's an emptiness inside. I'm missing a friend that I occasionally talked to over a period years, believing there would always be another day to catch up, to help me look at things from a different perspective, to help reveal a side of God that I might not have yet seen. I'm challenged to live life to the fullest - every day, and to cherish time with family and friends.

I did a funeral the week after Kyle's - the first one I've ever done. The "coincidence" of the timing wasn't lost on me. I shared stories that the family had shared with me. I challenged them to remember and remember well, to laugh and to laugh well, to grieve and to grieve well and to make sure they're ready. Then, I wrapped up the message with Kyle's last paragraph - I couldn't think of any more appropriate way to close the service than that.

I'm hurting - hurting for a wife who's lost a husband, for kids who have lost a dad, for a church that's lost a shepherd, for many who have lost a dear friend, and I'm hurting for myself. During Kyle's life, I was challenged to see people through God's eyes and love them with His love. Now, in this time of reflection, I've been challenged to that and so much more. I've been in ministry for most of the past 12 years, and every impact I've had in my life and in my ministry in the last 10 years, Kyle's been a part of it. I'm grateful to have known him, to have been challenged by him and to have been shaped by him.

Jen - you know how wonderful Kyle was. Nothing I could tell you could show you anything new in that - it just reinforces what you already know. Kyle was an incredible godly man who loved God, loved people and loved life. Thanks for sharing him with so many people and for all of the sacrifices you made.

Avery, Sutton and Jude - you knew your dad in such a special way, a way that no one else could. And, as wonderful as that was, and as wonderful as the memories that you have of your dad are, I hope that through all of the stories, thoughts, poems and ramblings you read through Footprints, that you are able to see even more how incredible your dad was. He touched the lives of so many people, and so many more people have been impacted as a result. AND his love for you was a great challenge to the rest of us in how to love others. I hope that I can show my love for my son as well as your dad showed his love for you!

One last story to share (for now)... I remember the Sunday after Avery was born. I remember Kyle's incredible joy as he shared about the birth of his daughter - you could just see the joy (even greater than his normal joy) beaming from his face. Then I remember when he shared what they (probably he) wanted to name her - "Snow" with the middle name being the sound "ph (f)". I'm still convinced to this day that Jen probably did have to stop Kyle from actually naming his daughter Snow F Lake. And I'll always remember that kind of joy!

Kyle, I miss you! Jen, Avery, Sutton, Jude and the rest of the family, we're hurting with you and praying for you. Ben, Jamie, Dave and Toni, we're praying for you and if there's anything we can do to help, please let me know. UBC, God has incredible days in store for you - somehow, someday. You're in our hearts and prayers.

*Love dearly in Christ's love*

*Kevin and Rebecca Roe*

It has been eight years since I have seen or spoken with Kyle, but I can still hear the sound of his laugh like it was yesterday. I don't recall ever being in his presence without hearing the sound of his genuine laughter. He loved being alive, and he loved people. He was a magnet...he just drew others to himself. This was true during his Baylor days and, from all I have heard, it was true every day after. He was passionate and alive. That is how I will always remember Kyle...full of life and ALIVE. Not just breathing air in and out of his lungs, but sucking the marrow out of life. I have fond memories of Kyle on the soccer field, always running circles around his opponent, especially me. I

still recall some skills he taught me. \_ He was a character...always cutting up, teasing and of course, laughing. He will be missed by so many whose lives were touched by his. He was a rare person who left an imprint on everyone he encountered. I trust peoples lives are forever changed both by Kyle's life and his sudden, tragic death.

My prayers have been and will continue to be with Jen and his three beautiful children. In the midst of this tragic loss is the beautiful legacy he has left behind.

May Grace and Peace be with Jen and the kids today and always. May the supernatural love of our Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ hold them up as they walk this painful road.

*Sincerely*

*Lindsay Denham Swain*  
Class '97

I didn't know Kyle but have been following the tragedy since I heard about it. I read the excerpt from the sermon he never had the chance to deliver. I now notice the breeze hitting my hair as I drive down the road, I get excited starting a new day, and I stop to listen when someone is giggling. Most importantly I've started appreciating my friends more and have begun to tell them so. I grieve for Kyle and never knew the man.

*Sail Friel*

I remember him always having a smile on his face and full of energy... he had joy!  
Sara Mahan

My name is Molly Bain. I wrote earlier. I am a freshman at Baylor and attend UBC. I forgot to mention a song that perfectly describes Kyle. It's by Monk & Neagle:

Memories surround me  
Sadness has found me  
I'd do anything for more time  
Never before, has someone meant more  
and I can't get you out of my mind.

There is so much that I don't understand  
but I know.

You're dancing with the angels  
Walking in new light  
Dancing with the angels  
And heaven fills your eyes  
Now that you're dancing with the angels

You had love for your family  
Love for all people  
Love for the Father and Son  
You're heart will be heard  
In your unspoken words  
Through generations to come

There is so much that I don't understand  
But I know.

You're dancing with the angels.  
Walking in new light.  
You're dancing with the angels.  
And heaven fills your eyes.  
And now that you're dancing..

We're only here, for such a short time  
I'm gonna stand up, shout out, sing hallelujah  
Until one day I see you again....

And we'll be dancing with the angels  
Walking in new light  
Dancing with the angels,  
And heaven will fill our eyes  
Dancing with the angels....

Hey,

My name is Shawn and I am a student at Baylor University who regularly attends UBC. Kyle has touched and reached me in so many ways that it's hard just to pick one. But the thing that instantly comes to mind when I think about how he has helped me grow was a particular night during Wednesdays at the HUB. He was talking about how there were these two guys and they were talking about religion and one of them said that it seemed hollow to him and that it was just words and he didn't really feel it. Then a couple years went by and they talked about it again and his friend said that by him saying that to him the terminology used meant nothing, but some events in his life changed that and his friend really helped him see the "way" and how to find glory in Jesus and power in the word. That particular night he looked at me or in my direction several times and the story really hit home and how, normally in church, it seems like a routine you go through every Sunday, and it felt like in some divine way he told that story for all of us but particularly the ones like me who needed to hear it.

Ever since, it hasn't felt as hollow, and there is more purpose and feeling behind every thing that is said about the Lord and the life a person can have with Him.

Kyle spoke to everyone in a way they could understand and made it seem so clear and really opened up my eyes to the kind of life that I could have with the Lord.

Ever since, my life has seemed easier and just putting all my worries in His hands has really helped. The Lord used Kyle to speak His word, and he did a darn good job of doing it. He has impacted my life in many ways and thus far has been among the top of my list as an influential person in my life.

I have heard a lot of people asking "what is God's plan for this to happen? He better let me know quick." The only way I can explain what I witnessed on October 30 is God's divine plan to call home one of the best messengers he had, and to use his passing as an impact not only on the church community of Waco but all over the world. Kyle was not just a pastor of a church in Texas, he was a piece of God's intricate puzzle. He was the piece that connected 800 people to God in a matter of seconds, he was the piece that connected thousands to God in a matter of hours, and he was the piece that connected millions across the world to God in just one day. I will miss Kyle and his great sermons on Sunday mornings, and I will keep his family and friends in my prayers.

*God Bless*

*Shawn Denny*

I attended the Catalyst Conference and the Lab sessions for the first time this past October. I attended the Church track during the Lab sessions, and I enjoyed Kyle's talk immensely. I immediately sensed a connection to his teaching through the life experiences he conveyed. I really felt like we had a lot in common, we both had blond hair, we both spent A LOT of in time in church growing up, and we both were discovering great (and similar) things in our personal journey. Our journeys had brought us closer to God and had ignited something in us that perhaps was dormant during our formative years.

But it wasn't till he mentioned his children that I new that we were definitely kindred spirits. He mentioned that he had a five year old daughter named Avery... I have a daughter named Avery, who turned 6 two weeks before the conference, he also mentioned his three year old twin sons (I have a two year old daughter ). He illustrated with joy how in the few short years with his children, they had taught him things about God and life that without them he never would have discovered (I feel the same way). The passion and love Kyle had for his wife and children was unmistakable during his 45 minute talk. In my brief exposure to Kyle, I came away thinking... Husband, Dad, Pastor, insightful follower of Christ and all around cool guy.

The truths that he shared during Catalyst impacted me greatly. I was halfway through Kyle's book 'Understanding God's Will' when I heard of his passing. I was deeply saddened.

I will continue to pray for Kyle's family.

Kyle's legacy for me... is an example of life, well lived. Passionate about the discovery of our God's greatness, enjoying and loving our families, and doing our best to connect this generation to God.

*Kyle will be missed!*

*Brent Coulter*

My name is Reid Sterrett and I am a Church planter on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I heard of Kyle's death through the media and e-mails shortly after it had happened. All I really knew was that a pastor had died tragically not drawing the connection of who this pastor was or what Church. Many of us were saddened and prayed for this unknown family. It is just today November 18th 2005 that I'm figuring out who this pastor was. I have been struggling all day to come up with a message to deliver to about 200 college students this evening. This morning I basked in an article called 7 Mile Beach in the Catalyst groupzine study guide that Kyle had written. Over lunch I was sharing some of the ideas from the article with some other pastors when they pointed out the Kyle was the pastor that had died. All that to say I could see God still using Kyle's life even after death. Our three week series at the college is called Blink. One of the ideas we have been presenting is that life can change in the blink of an eye. Life is but vapor. We have challenged the students to focus more on living and less on leading.

If I could say one thing to Kyle's wife and children it would be that God used his life as a drink offering poured out to the glory of God. Kyle was a warrior of light having influence still today all the way across the country on a college campus in Maryland. And I know that God has crowned him with the crown of righteousness set aside for all those that are faithful. We are sorry to hear of his loss and grieve for the church and the family.

*Reid Sterrett*

I am a Baptist Minister in Scotland, I am 34 and have just returned from the US on a 3 week holiday. I heard about Kyle from a friend. Since then, I have read the stuff on the web and researched a bit about this young man. Like thousands of others I am moved by his dedication and devotion to Christ. Tomorrow evening in our Church in Glasgow we will be praying for UBC in Waco and Kyle's family. Be assured of our absolute sympathy and prayers at a time when we would trust that you know the Lord's nearness and blessing. Having seen Kyle's picture yesterday I saw in his eyes a fire and passion that beckoned me on to press on towards the prize!

*Yours in the Lord*

*Rev Brian R More*

My connection to Kyle goes back to Tyler where we played soccer together at Tyler Lee High School. I was one year behind Kyle in school and graduated with his younger sister, Kristi. My best memories of Kyle come from the soccer field where he and I were co-captains of the State Finalist Tyler Lee soccer team in 1990. During the State High School Soccer Playoffs in 1990, Kyle and I were trying to think of a way to motivate our teammates for the upcoming 2nd round State Playoff game in Tyler against JJ Pearce High School. Sitting in Kyle's game room at the family home on Pinedale the night before the game, Kyle and I came up with what we thought to be a brilliant idea.

Oh boy is all I can say!

The day of the game, Kyle and I hung motivational posters throughout the locker room and on the walkway to the field. I was to bring a trash can and stereo and Kyle was to bring lighter fluid, matches and newspaper. We told the team to be at the locker room 2 hours before kick-off. Our brilliant idea was a team bonfire before the game with a lot of yelling, clapping, and music. Without a doubt it was like a scene from the movie Hoosiers. In front of a tremendous crowd, a 3-2 win in double overtime pushed us into the next round of the State Playoffs.

While I know Kyle was an incredible husband, father, son and brother, he was as incredible a champion and leader. Kyle's children should know that their father led by example and always followed his instinct. How could I forget that he did all of this with that infamous "Kyle Lake" smile.

God bless the entire Lake family.

*Sincerely*  
*Jeff T Eckert*

Kyle was a contagious person. He was someone that everyone else wanted to be around and when you were with him you wanted to do whatever he was doing. Whenever you saw Kyle walk into a room you always knew it was going to be fun. His smile and giggle would break through the most tense people. He had an amazing ability to make everything okay. His humor was usually the foundation for this, but somehow it always went beyond just humor. Kyle had the uncanny ability to disarm you with his fun loving nature and then fill you with truth. He was always pouring into people and he made it look effortless. As I reflect about what it was that made Kyle so unique I think about his love for Jesus. In a time where even Christ followers have divided hearts - we give ourselves to work, family, Jesus, friends, entertainment, etc... Somehow, Kyle was wholehearted. He loved Jesus with everything. This affected every area of his life. I'm not saying that Kyle was a perfect person, because he wasn't.

But he loved Jesus in a perfect way - thru his life.

I thank God for the life of Kyle Lake.

*Marc McCartney* - Co-creator of Ma (with Kyle)

I was not a regular member at UBC, but attended many times throughout my 4-year stint at Baylor University. So because of my lack of participation, my interaction with Kyle was limited. I am good friends with Holly Jones and Stephanie Thompson (lived upstairs) who were good friends of Kyle. It was amazing to me how much Kyle cared about the people in his church whether they were active or inactive. From what I saw, he really took hold of all his relationships with friends. He didn't treat his congregation as a congregation, but as a group of friends.

I remember at church when any worship band was playing, Kyle would always stand with his hands in his pockets, smiling, and doing this little head nod thing. It was almost like a weak head banging attempt. He appreciated the music that God was providing every week for the congregation, and even if he didn't know the song, he attempted to catch on quick with the words. That is what always brought me to the church was the love of the arts and music that was obvious in the community. He will be missed, but I am certain that his acts will be engrained on many hearts for a long time.

*Nathan Prange*

My parents, my sister and I, all know Kyle and his whole family from growing up with them in school at Robert E. Lee in Tyler and First Baptist Church Tyler. David, Shirley, Jody, Jonah, Kyle and Kristi. Kyle was a Senior when I was a Freshman, but that distance in age didn't matter. Everyone knew who Kyle Lake was! His younger sister Kristi and my older sister Tiffany graduated together and my long time friend Stephanie England married Kyle's oldest brother, Jody.

I will always remember Kyle as a person so full of life and so enthusiastic about anything he was involved in. You never saw him without that wonderful smile on his face and love in his heart. He was always ready to give a hug, whether you needed or wanted one or not. From early on I knew Kyle would be some sort of leader or teacher of the word of God. He knew so much about the Bible and shared everything he knew with just about anyone he came into contact with. It's been several years since I have seen or talked to Kyle but he's just one of those people you will never ever forget because he made such an impact on your life. What a true inspiration to us all.

More specifically, I remember when he was my group leader at youth camp the summer of 1991 or 1992 when we went to Florida. We all had gathered into small group to go through our lesson for the morning and in closing he wanted us to pray as a group, one by one, out loud! I was scared to death. I was not one to pray "out loud" and certainly not in front of a group of people. Well there was Kyle, reassuring me that it would be ok and the words would just come to me if I just trusted in God. He put his arm around me to comfort me and lead me through it and sure enough, I did get through it.

I will always be grateful to Kyle for this because it was sort of a stepping stone for me to get over my fear of public speaking. To this day, I have overcome that fear and I am now a Sunday School teacher at my church for the 2 year olds and am very involved throughout the church. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever see myself doing such a thing. He probably never thought another thing about what he did that day but I will remember it for the rest of my life!

My heart goes out to all the Lake's out there... I love you all, and I will keep praying for you in this extremely difficult time. Here's one of my very favorite little songs we sing in church every once in a while and I find it quite appropriate to share with you now.

In Christ,  
Tara Poston Rhodes, James, Toby & Madison  
May the Lord, Mighty Lord  
Bless and Keep us forever;  
Grant us peace, perfect peace  
Strength in every endeavor.  
Lift your eyes and see His face  
And His strength forever;  
May the Lord, Mighty Lord  
Bless and keep us forever.

"O child of God, if you could see your sorrows and troubles from the other side; if, instead of looking up at them from earth, you would look down on them from the heavenly places where you sit with Christ; if you knew how they are reflecting in prismatic beauty before the gaze of heaven, the bright light of Christ's face, you would be content that they should cast their deep shadows over the mountain slopes of existence." (from Streams in the Desert)

*keep making rainbows*  
*anne smith*

My name is Sara. I never had the honor of meeting Kyle nor have I ever attended UBC. I am a huge fan of the David Crowder Band and was aware that David led worship at UBC. For some reason I must have signed up for the newsletters and emails and it was such a pleasure to read them and learn about all the fun things that are happening at UBC. I have a son attending college in Dallas so I really appreciated the fact that this young man of GOD decided to obey a calling from the Lord and minister to the students of Baylor. I was horrified to hear about the accident and my heart goes out to Kyle's wife and children.

To Kyle's children: I am confident that your father's obedience to the Lord has and will continue to have an amazing impact to everyone who attended UBC, especially the impact he had on the college students. I may be a stranger to you, but you will forever live in my heart and in my prayers. Blessings to you always.

*In His Mercy*  
*Sara Alaniz*

Dear friends,

I was really shocked and felt very sad this morning when I heard about Kyle from an Emergent e-mail about Kyle Lake. Only yesterday I had in mind to send an e-mail to him with thanks for his book Understanding God's Will. I first heard of Kyle and the book through Brian McLaren and snapped up a copy. It's currently forming the basis of a teaching series in our church on Sunday mornings - and I wanted to tell Kyle what a liberating and positive impact it is having on many lives. Perhaps somewhere in the communion of saints he'll know?

I will be praying for his wife and children, spoken of so warmly in the book. It's impossible to comprehend how they'll be feeling, and my heart goes out to them. Somehow through it all may they know God's presence and a defiant hope in Christ.

*Yours faithfully*  
*Keith*

Dear friend:

I am from Puerto Rico, and with deep sadness I read about Pastor Kyle, but he is in the glorious presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I never knew him personally, never talked or sent an email to him. I just read about the news in cnn.com and want to let you all know that you all are in our hearts and prayers, that we are with you all and I know that I will meet him in heaven and together all will praise our God. I am not fluent in English, but even in Spanish there is not enough words to explain how I feel and how I feel for their family and kids. May God bless u all and I admire the braveness of a young man who said YES to Jesus' call to ministry and gave his life doing our Lord's will.

-Angel M. Ríos Pagán

My first encounter with Kyle occurred at Kappa Sigma Smoker (fall 2001- if my memory serves me correctly). I was Rushing and was at the event with some buddies of mine...we were more than excited about the thought of perhaps getting a bid to join the Brotherhood in just a few short days.

Kyle was the Keynote Speaker that night and his speech was legendary! You might wonder, "What great insight did Kyle have that particular night? How did he eloquently present, to a room full of 18 and 19 year old guys, what the Kappa Sigma Brotherhood meant to him? In what ingenious way did he go about weaving his Brotherhood experience into his Baylor experience, into his overall life and Christian walk?"

True to Kyle's style, he approached the evening with humor in his heart and an underlying power and purpose in his message. He even told a story that night about his adventures with his adored pledge class, as in one night when they strategically and mercilessly canvassed the entire Baylor campus with "M.A." (pronounced "mah") on every car window in site using shoe polish. Everyone at Baylor during that time asked, "What is M.A.? What does it stand for? How did it get on my car and every other car at Baylor?"

M.A. stood for Midnight Assassins. It was the last minute brainchild of a Kappa Sigma Pledge class that had many other better things to do, but couldn't resist the satisfying temptation of literally leaving their mark on Baylor University. Kyle entertainingly went on to explain with delight how speculations of their all-night escapade only grew—the main buzz on campus in the days following being, "Who did it? Why did they do it? What does it mean?"

Kyle jokingly reflected, "My pledge classes' pride about the M.A. scheme grew even more when we noticed copy cats repeating our feat in the years to follow."

By this time, Kyle had the entire room full of Rushees and Kappa Sigma Brothers literally on the ground laughing at his pledge class' amazing idea and the overwhelming satisfaction they derived from it. He also had every guy in the room that night wishing he'd have come up with such an inspired objective as to polish the random initials of M.A. on every car at Baylor. Kyle had the remarkable gift of vivid story telling.

Kyle went on to explain that the ultimate satisfaction from this, prank of all pranks which his pledge class perfectly executed, came when he was driving in Dallas about 3 or 4 years after that momentous Midnight Assassins' Night. Kyle said he glanced over at the car beside him on the highway and sure enough, that car had a Baylor Student decal and was covered in the initials M.A.!!!

Kyle tied up his story at the Kappa Sigma Smoker that night with fond sentiments about his times at Baylor and accolades for the Brotherhood. However, the most important part of Kyle's Keynote Address that evening came when he concluded with his Christian testimony and explained to everyone in the room how much he loved his Lord Jesus Christ.

*Blessings*  
*Kyle Cumbie*

AEKDB

May '04 Graduate, Baylor University

My eyes do not play tricks on me... I use them to see what God has done through Kyle and UBC. It's because of this that I can thank God for a man that I have never met and I can understand that Kyle was chosen by our wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ, to do His work. Thank you, Kyle.

I rejoice in knowing that he is present with our Lord right now, and I am faithful that God will continue to provide for UBC, it's people and it's ministry.

*Chris Webb*

I love when God teaches me about an aspect of Himself through one of His creations. Pastor Kyle Lake taught me about God's acceptance. Kyle helped set an accepting atmosphere at UBC: one where clothes, backgrounds, or occupations didn't matter. God says, "Come just as you are," and so did Kyle.

Kyle had a gift of ministering to college and young adults in an amazing and incredibly unique way. Not only did he have a gift, but he passionately used it for the Lord. In my three years at UBC, Kyle was constantly finding new ways to give God's Word to students. Sometimes he used pop music, popular movies, skits, random videos taken on campus, or even "mass" gatherings. Many of

Kyle's sermons on cd have found their way into my car, into the hands of my non-Christian friends who were interested in the "Matrix" or "Bruce Almighty", and into the hearts of friends who needed encouragement.

School teachers never teach you to color outside the lines, but my experience at UBC did. Kyle helped me to examine my faith for myself based on God's Word and not solely on what I had been previously taught and spoon-fed. UBC is unlike any other Baptist church, and that is part of its blessing. I was blessed beyond earthly measure by Kyle's ministry and example, and my life will never be the same because Kyle was so faithful to God's calling on his life.

*Michelle Winter Harris*  
Baylor grad December 2003

I never met Kyle personally, though I had visited UBC a handful of times while going to Baylor grad school. In April of 2005 I stopped in the Waco Barnes & Noble on my way back home to the Dallas / Fort Worth area. It was a Sunday night and I was browsing through some books to take a break from driving. I saw Understanding God's Will on a Staff Pick's shelf, and decided to take a look. I recognized Kyle's name from various articles in Relevant magazine. I read all of Chapter One while standing there in the aisle, and knew I would buy the book. It's hard to explain, but what I was reading was funny and insightful...and it had this honest voice that captured what it's like to earnestly want more of God without coming out cheesy and cliché.

I drove home that night, and, thanks to all the coffee I'd had, I couldn't sleep. So I sat down to re-start the book. After that, I couldn't put it down and I finished the book sometime around 4 AM. It really raised some interesting questions...I love books like that. They make me think. Ever since then I've looked for his articles in Relevant magazine.

I hope that a lot of previously untold stories - really great, cool stories - of Kyle's life get shared through this Footprints thing. I hope his family, over time, gets to see the ways other people's lives have been touched by Kyle. And somewhere in line, behind all the personal anecdotes of interactions and things, I'm sure this FOOTPRINT will be one of many that says, "I didn't know him personally, but his writing helped me run, it helped me push on, it helped me follow God better."

*David Brown*

I went to UBC off and on while I was at Baylor. I always adored Kyle and his preaching. I always thought it was so neat as a freshman at Baylor that this "cool" guy with such a cute wife and adorable one-year-old could actually be a pastor...my idea of a pastor was always different. I never had a personal relationship with Kyle, but I knew for sure who he was and how he lived.

The footprints he left in my life were his actions...in and outside of the church. In the church I loved the way he talked about his family. He adored them and talked about them in the most loving way, something that those close to Kyle would find obvious, but for someone who strictly observed him and listened to his teaching, it was neat to hear. I loved watching his relationship with the band (at that time David was there all the time) and the staff of the church. You could tell they loved him and looked up to him as their pastor and friend... again, just by watching I could tell. I know Kyle loved Common Grounds. I know this because I, too, loved it and spent literally every day there studying or having a quiet time. When I got bored or distracted, I would naturally "people watch", one of my favorite pastimes. He was always in there... either studying the word or meeting with people. So many different types of people. I loved watching the relationships he had with such a wide variety of people. You could tell they loved him too. I remember one day, I was sitting on a couch right next to the table he was at, and he had just met someone. They asked him what he did for a living and he told them he was a pastor. The person laughed, and told him "no you aren't!" I

laughed to myself because that guy must have had the same idea of a pastor as I did... old, uptight, kind of hard to approach. But not him, always warm and inviting, always meeting with people to share his love of Christ. Pretty cool to realize about a person when I didn't even technically "know him." Pretty much a stranger to me, besides the fact that I would go and listen to him preach every once in a while. But just from observing him, he made footprints in my life.

As an encouragement to his precious family... My dad died when I was a baby, my sister was 3, and my brother was 5. I have never learned more from anyone than I have from my strong, amazing mother. She has so much wisdom and has blessed so many others from what she has experienced in her life. We (the kids) have also all learned so much and been able to help others from our experience, and the journey my heart has been on since that story of my life has been hard, but irreplaceable. I am praying for you, Jennifer, and your sweet family personally every day.

*Melanie Walsh*

I am a 35 year old woman emailing from a desk in Los Angeles. Like I do every morning, I was sorting through emails and skimmed my "850 Words of Relevant" newsletter and saw the tragic news. I have no personal connection to Pastor Lake or his family or his church. My only thread to UBC is an old worship CD put out by David Crowder. I have supernaturally worshiped along side my brothers and sisters while driving around LA or in the shower or at my desk. The real connection though is so much stronger, unbreakable even. We are connected by His blood, His grace, His promises. And as part of Christ's bride I am mourning along side of you, grieving the loss of a true shepherd. My prayers are rising for you all... that unity and comfort and refining will abound and that His grace will be experienced in ways like never before. My words are so inadequate and for that I am truly sorry. Just please know that you are loved... even across these distant and unknown miles.

*From my heart  
Tracey Lane*

I wasn't formally acquainted with Kyle. I knew him only by sight and reputation. Having visited UBC several times as a freshman at Baylor, I was able to recognize him as we crossed paths at Common Grounds and various other locations around Waco.

Although we never spoke, I remember he had a smile on his face every time I saw him and he interacted so effortlessly with whomever he came across. I remember thinking that I would have liked to been his friend.

Based on these few observations and encounters with Kyle during my time at Baylor, I have to believe when he arrived at the gates of Heaven he was greeted with the words, "Well done, My good and faithful servant. Well done."

*Lindsay Gafford*

I had the fortunate pleasure of attending Baylor University at the same time as Kyle. I was a year older but we associated with many of the same friends. I always will remember Kyle as someone who had a smile on his face. He was so calm and friendly that it was impossible not to like him. He was truly a light of God. May God give your family peace, hope and comfort during this painful time.

*Jen McBrayer*

I would like Kyle's children to know this about their father:

Kyle Lake was a man of character. The one thing that I constantly noticed about Kyle was how much joy he derived from his children. I always enjoyed listening to Kyle use his children in a sermon as an example of faith, or just for a funny story. Everyone knew how much Kyle adored his children. You could tell he was fascinated with them and was literally overflowing with love for them. I remember thinking to myself that he was a perfect example of how I hope the father of my children would be. He was a man of God. He was a wonderful teacher and leader. He was deeply respected. People were drawn to him. That is the Kyle Lake that I remember.

*Alison Rodman*

My Hero...Kyle Lake

He first time I ever saw Kyle was on the soccer field in High School, and before I ever saw him, I already knew what a phenomenal player he was due to my coaches and teammates who had played against him in the past. In my first game against Robert E. Lee High School, I immediately learned that all of the rumors were true, he was very fast, extremely agile, he had excellent ball control... he was a great player. However, one thing that I hadn't heard, but was very evident was that Kyle was physically impressive. He was very fit, lean and muscular, and good looking guy. Kyle was a couple of years older than me, and I was only able to play against him a couple of times in High School, but Kyle was the special type of player who had a legacy that I would remember for a long time.

After graduating H.S., I decided to go to Baylor, and as soon as I arrived, a friend, Jeff James, who I had played soccer with in the past convinced me to try-out for the Baylor soccer team, which I did. The first day of try-outs, I saw him... Kyle Lake from Robert E. Lee High School was now playing soccer for Baylor. That is where my relationship with Kyle began, and where I officially met a friend, a tremendous role model, and one of the people that I most admire on this earth!

Kyle was the unquestionable leader of our team, but Kyle didn't "lead" like so many others. He wasn't a loud, brash, in-your-face, critical leader like many people are. He always, always, always, led by example. He led by being a great person, both on and off the field. He led by always having a great attitude, always smiling and always caring, regardless of the day, the circumstances, or the situation; He led by always being at practice and working hard to improve, even though he was already great. He led by his competitive nature. He led by his passion for soccer, his passion for friendship, and his passion for life. He led by making every practice, every game, every experience that he was a part of fun and exciting; He led by making me, and everyone else on his team, want to be a better player, teammate, friend, and a better person, in general. Without a doubt, Kyle was the glue that formed, molded, and held our team together. Because of his leadership, Kyle absolutely made our team much, much better every year that he played. More importantly though, Kyle's leadership had a lasting effect on so many of our players by helping us become better people.

The beautiful thing about Kyle was that he had it all... he was good-looking, he was athletic, he was intelligent, he was funny, he came from an affluent background, he was loved by everyone who knew him. Yet, he was the nicest, most genuine, modest, caring, loving, and loyal person that I've ever met, and I loved him for that. Simply put, Kyle had it all, and that did not change his priorities one bit. From the first time I met him, until the day he died, it was always evident that Kyle absolutely loved life, he loved the Lord, he loved his family, and loved everyone who he encountered. As a result, Kyle was the most loved person that I know.

I have had so many great and positive influences in my life, but there are two people who truly stand out as people who I most admire. One is my grandfather, and the other is Kyle Lake... what a truly awesome person he was.

Yesterday's funeral was a great testimony to Kyle, and I have never witnessed such an outpouring of love for one person as I witnessed at his funeral. With little to no notice, people came from everywhere to pay tribute to the man who had an immeasurable impact on thousands of lives and who loved, cherished, and made the most of every day that God gave to him. I thank God for Kyle and for the impact that he had on my life. He truly was a blessing from God to so many of us.

I know that we are all very deeply saddened by the loss of Kyle, but we are also comforted to know that Kyle is in Heaven right now looking down on us with his magical smile, and I am optimistically awaiting the opportunity to meet him in Heaven one day to express my gratitude to him for the life he lived and the enormous impact he had on my life.

I wish the very best for the entire Lake family, but I especially hope and pray that his children will learn, realize and understand what a great and awesome man their daddy was!

*We will all miss him*

*Adam McKelvey*

Kyle lived across the hall and down one room from me in Martin Hall during our freshman year at Baylor, 1990-1991. As many college freshman, I was trying to take those next steps in life and figure out the direction of my life as we all were taking a step away from our parents and down the road of independence and growth. Kyle seemed to have it all together a little more than most at that age, as his deep faith shined through in his actions and his words. There was something about him that drew each of us closer to the Lord just by being around him. I will always remember the good times that we had in Martin Hall, and I will cherish the time, although brief, that I had getting to know Kyle that year.

Unfortunately, our majors and extracurricular activities took us different directions over the remainder of our college career. Our interaction narrowed to an infrequent encounter on campus when our paths would cross, just long enough to exchange hello's and see how things were going. After college, my path has led me to Houston and now to Dallas, so I wasn't fortunate enough to know about and experience Kyle's wonderful ministry at UBC. Only now am I finding out about the many lives he touched in his ministry.

I told a co-worker today about the tragedy that occurred to Kyle yesterday, and I mentioned that I had known Kyle from living down the hall at the dorm, but that I hadn't stayed in touch with him over the many years since college. My co-worker was surprised that I could remember what, in his eyes, appeared to be simply a brief acquaintance from many years ago, but I told him that you could never forget Kyle. Once your life had been touched by him, you'd never forget. And I regret that I didn't make an effort to reach out to him and build on the relationship that started 15 years ago, but was far too brief.

As I put my 2-year-old son and 4-year-old daughter to bed tonight, it breaks my heart to think about the loss that Kyle's twin boys and daughter feel today and will feel in the future. I hope that these "footprints" can somehow lessen the hurt and loss in the hearts of Jennifer and their children, and I hope that many years from now, when the children wonder who their father was, these memories can serve to let them know that their father was truly an outstanding servant of the Lord -- one who inspires you to be a better man yourself.

We lost a fine young man yesterday.... one of the best. And although my time with Kyle was very brief 15 years ago, I am truly grateful that God brought our paths together.

To Jennifer and your children - may God bless you and carry you through this loss.

*Sincerely Mark Shields*

I have attended UBC since the first Sunday of my freshman year. Now a senior, I look back and regret how I have not "plugged in" as much as I should have. But nearly every Sunday, I've been there to listen to Kyle, Dave, and be a part of a church experience that I will never have anywhere else.

Kyle was not a close personal friend of mine. We had met and spoken a few times before and after services, but Kyle meant something different to me. He embodied and represented everything that I thought my faith should be. Kyle gave clear words to the thoughts I could not fully comprehend. He stood on the forefront of postmodern Christianity, offering us a deeper examination of our faith in a way none of us had seen before.

I always saw a theme in Kyle's ministry of finding God in everyday happenings. Rather than offering Him as just an explanation, Kyle made it clear He is the reason. I grew up in a semi-traditional Bible church, where almost every Sunday there was a deep theological discourse. Kyle's message showed us how to look for God in new ways, through an intellectual enterprise and appreciation for everything in the world that He created. For me, and I know for countless more, Kyle's words were a breath of fresh air. He was an amazing teacher, a brilliant thinker, and a warm and caring man. In all of the pain I feel now, I remind myself how lucky I am to have at least known him and heard him. My short time at UBC is now an even greater blessing. He may be away from us, but his spirit will FOREVER be with us through his words and impact on so many lives.

*Garrett Golding*  
Class of 2006

This footprint is dedicated to the twins.

I graduated Baylor in May 2004. Prior to graduation, UBC was my church home. I looked forward to every Sunday morning during those four years while I was at Baylor. Each sermon was different and always fit together in a surprising way.

Now, approximately two years since my graduation, I visit Waco a few times a year and never miss the opportunity for a Sunday Morning at UBC. Of all the Sunday mornings spent at church during college, the most memorable morning for me was during one of my visits after graduating. I remember your Dad bringing the both of you in from the nursery and holding you in front of the entire church. He told us how excited the two of you were to see the new Coldplay DVD. He played the music during church and watched the two of you dance around the stage. When the music ended he spoke of how much he loved his family and how proud he was to be a father. He held both of you in his arms, and, as tears streamed down his face, he proclaimed his love for his boys. Thank you, Kyle!

*God Bless Shantell Nelson*

Your father was an anchor in the two biggest influences at Baylor... Kappa Sigma and UBC. I will be forever grateful for his heart, mission, and life. The words "Love God, embrace beauty, and live life to the fullest" will forever echo in my soul.

*Ashton Gustafson*

To Pastor Kyle Lake's family,

Our hearts are deeply grieving for the sudden loss of such a wonderful father, husband, and pastor.

Even though you do not know us and we will probably never meet while here on Earth, our family wishes to express to you the deep appreciation we have for Pastor Kyle and the part he

played in our son's life. Matt graduated from Baylor in 2001 and from his second year there until he graduated, he was privileged to be under the guidance and teaching of Pastor Kyle.

Many times he shared with us during those 3 years what a positive influence Kyle was in his life. Being a Kappa Sigma brother with Matt was an extra special bond for them. Matt would often call home to share with us some wonderful biblical insight he had learned through Kyle's ministry.

We attended UBC several times and each time was one of the highlights of our visits to Baylor and Waco.

Even though we are strangers, we would like to be a part of honoring Kyle in some way and hope this small token of our heartfelt sympathy will in some way assist the Lake children.

Our son's walk with Christ is stronger today because Kyle gave his life's work to make a impact for eternity.

*With our deepest sympathy*

*Dale and Jane Revell*  
Parents of Matthew Revell

My reflection comes from someone who did not attend UBC often and had not even officially met Kyle, but was still touched by him. I actually attended a different church in town for 2 years, but was eventually completely ostracized by them because of my political beliefs. I still had faith in God, but was utterly disillusioned with the church. UBC became the only church in town where

I felt comfortable, like I could be myself and didn't have to put up a front. It is basically the only place in Waco for people like me, who don't have it all figured out and refuse to be fake, yet genuinely want to love God. Even though I didn't attend all that often, the fact that I knew UBC people would love and accept me as I am meant a lot- and I know that those people were trained to love

that way by Kyle. Pastors like Kyle, who love and teach without a political or other agenda are few and far between in America today, but I believe that they represent Jesus' true heart for His church.

I would always hear about my UBC friends going out to coffee with him, which I feel like a lot of Baylor-area pastors do, but what struck me as unusual about the conversations my friends told me they had with Kyle is that they were agenda-less. He simply wanted to get to know them, and I know they felt appreciated because of it. I feel like so many discipleship times are legalistic and uncomfortable, and then neither of you is really able to grow in your walk with Christ. Kyle seemed to have understood that someone will never let you influence their life if you are not TRULY friends first. That is a big deal to me.

Kyle and UBC people have given me hope that I will be able to find another place like it that will accept me when I leave Baylor. Thank you.

*Amelia Thomas*

Kyle Lake was a star soccer player for Robert E. Lee High School in Tyler, Texas. When my son (now 24 years old) had his 9th birthday party, I invited Kyle (then a senior in high school) out to our house to put on a soccer "clinic" for my son and his friends (all young soccer players). They really enjoyed listening and learning from Kyle. He was very important role model for those young guys. He made a lasting impression on them.

*Jim Quay*

Tyler, Texas

This is really hard for me, you know? To sit here and look at Kyle's picture and again try and make myself grasp that he's gone! Kyle was a wonderful person. I mean, he was amazing! There are no words to explain the impact he had on my life. From his wise words, to his enlightening smile, to the ridiculous down-to earth way in which he approached everything, Kyle was for me a father figure, a brother, a mentor, a pastor, a teacher, a great example, and a friend! Kyle shaped me as a person in so many different ways, just by listening, by joking, by smiling, by hugging, and by just full-on embracing who I was. He counseled me and pulled me through many things I would have otherwise dropped. Getting to college was a hard transition for me, but it was made so much easier thanks to Kyle and the UBC community! He really was the smartest man I have ever met, and he was so approachable, never once hesitating to listen. To me, and I am sure to many others, he was the embodiment of Christ, a little bit of Heaven here on Earth.

I will always remember Kyle as the person who, during first my semester in college at the fall retreat, chased me around a bonfire to put his marshmallow-filled hands all over my face, hugged me, tickled me, giggled his signature giggle, and said "so glad you made it." I just know Kyle had a huge impact on many people, he's changed the lives of so many college students, and my experience at Baylor would have never been the same without him. I cannot begin to understand why he's gone now, and I miss him terribly, and I know that no words anybody can say can fully explain the great person that Kyle was. But I know that he remains here with us, watching over us, in all our hearts, and his beautiful soul is smiling down at us from above. Although it is hard to keep going, I will live out what Kyle so energetically preached...." I will love God, embrace beauty, and live life to the fullest."

*Paola Guerrero*

My name is Danny Phillips, and I serve as Associate Student Pastor at FBC Boerne. I'm really not sure where to begin...

I picked up *Understanding God's Will* from Relevant Books, because I wanted to see how others saw the will of God. It happened to be written by a man named Kyle Lake from Waco, TX. So excited to support the home team here in Texas, I read and struggled and grasped, just as Kyle had struggled. He would have had to struggle and wrestle in order to write the way he did. As I read, I connected. I whole-heartedly agreed with everything he wrote, and it seemed as though he was able to verbalize every thought I had. God was truly using Kyle as a mouthpiece to help me see what I was going through. I finished the book with a clearer, more defined perspective and also had discovered a new author to support.

When *re-Understanding Prayer* came out, I jumped on it, and, once again, Kyle had written things that God had been revealing to me about prayer over the past year, and, once again, I connected.

I shared with my fiancée about this book and about this pastor, who was speaking truth and in such a biblical and yet non-traditional way, and when I told her who it was, she looked at me as though I was crazy. You see, she is from Tyler, TX and grew up with the Lake family. Kyle was her Disciple Now Leader as a student, and she had a huge crush on him as a then 7th grade girl might for a great collegiate man such as Kyle. As my fiancée's mom came down this past weekend for a wedding shower, she shared the same enthusiasm about Kyle and God's ministry through him. I looked forward to possibly meeting his family, and maybe even seeing first-hand the ministry Kyle Lake was doing.

I never got this chance. I received a call about 1:30 on Sunday as my fiancée told me the tragedy, and my breath left me. I was hurt. I was confused. I was, as I still am, torn at the thought that he was no longer here on earth. I have struggled the last several days, as I am sure many have been struggling to an even greater degree than I, with the why's and bewilderment of understanding this season the Lake family, UBC, and many others are in. I have no words of comfort, only to say, Kyle

Lake was, and still is, a man that God has used in countless, unknown, unending ways.

I began to think of Oswald Chambers who died in his 40's and Rich Mullins who died long before anyone had ever dreamed of. This may be too bold of me, but I would put Kyle Lake in this same category—as a man who sensed the heart of God and boldly questioned the heart of man. He shared himself vulnerably, completely, unselfishly, and whole-heartedly. And all this I have learned just through his writing, I can't even imagine sitting and talking and experiencing his life alongside him as so many were fortunate to do.

I do know this... I will share the teachings and the words of Kyle Lake for many, many years to come. I will share the great things God showed Kyle, to the glory of God, because I don't think Kyle would have wanted anything less. He has inspired, encouraged, and been much bigger than his human body would have been capable of. His legacy will live on, through his writings, but more importantly, in the hearts of the people he touched.

*With a Sincere Heart  
Danny Phillips*

I grew up in the church, and I really thought that I was well-off as a Christian. I almost prided myself, thinking that I knew more about who Jesus was than most people. I got into college and started to make a switch from my home church in Robinson to UBC because my girlfriend brought me along. From the first time I stepped into the church, I could tell it was a special place. I heard Kyle preach, but it wasn't like most sermons. It was deep. It made me think. I continued to go there for a few months, and it was obvious Kyle had taught me so much. Every day after church, I would go to my parents and tell them what I learned. I would go tell my youth pastor at my home church everything that I learned. I felt like I was learning more and more every week!

It was only a few months, but everything that I had learned under Kyle's ministry was amazing. I hadn't even met him. I didn't talk to him... but the impact he had on my life was so huge. Kyle touched a lot of people. People he didn't even know about. People like me. From what I saw of him when he was on stage preaching, I could tell he was an awesome person. 100% in love with Jesus. His dedication and obedience was inspiring. His teachings me mature as a Christian. I thank God for Kyle Lake.

*Stephen S*

Reflecting on the life of Kyle Lake takes me to the first time I visited UBC. I had heard nothing but amazing things about this "Baylor Church", the passion of worship and the devotion of their youthful pastor.

In fact, the very first time I sat to listen to a sermon gazing upon this trendy pastor, I thought, "Just how old is he?" The moment I was about to turn and ask my neighbor, Kyle started talking about his baby girl. His eyes filled with the joy only a father's love can show. I try to remember what he was referring to about her at the time, but it's just the matter in which he passionately reflected the love of Christ that sticks in my mind.

Then, with the same passionate flare he expressed for his daughter, he started speaking of the love Jesus Christ had for his servants. From that moment his age was no matter to me, I had seen the gift of joyful passion Kyle had for Jesus, his family, and his church. Kyle Lake was a man after God's heart. He wore the name of Jesus on his soul and touched the lives of everyone he encountered. He was a man of virtue, character, honor, integrity, but, more importantly, he exemplified the Fruits of the Spirit. Kyle Lake has left a Legacy to cherish.

*In His Name <><  
Jered*

Proverbs 3:5-6

My hometown, like Kyle's, is Tyler, Texas. I remember going to High School at Robert E. Lee H.S. with him. I don't have any deep reflections on my experiences with Kyle Lake, but I do remember going with a friend to First Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas and meeting Kyle once. Just once. But from that one meeting, what I remember is how happy he seemed. How content with life he was. I was not a believer back then, but now, having been saved finally by the grace of God, I know what was most likely in his heart that made him seem so full of joy.

I saw the announcement of the accident on the Drudgereport.com of all places and thought that it couldn't be the same Kyle Lake I had met once. I was very saddened by the news. Having a wife and two children and a set of twins myself, in heaven, I was especially saddened for his wife and children.

May God's grace and mercy be upon them all.

*Soli Deo Gloria*

*R Fender*

Kyle played a huge role in my life for the 5 years I was at Baylor. He was actually one of the first people I was introduced to my senior year in High School when I was deciding where to go to school. He encouraged me to come down to Baylor and convinced me that I would be used by God if I came.

Little did I know at that time that I had so much in common with Kyle. He immediately plugged me in at UBC and instantaneously became one of my main mentors. We shared a love for sports, were fraternity brothers (even though he was 10 years older), and he served as a guide in my journey towards maturing as a Christian.

I remember saying often after services at UBC how Kyle always left me with a haunting question that I could not shake for the following week about my faith. His sermons and lessons were deep and never typical. I cannot remember him ever giving a list of do's and don'ts, nor acting as he was higher than his congregation. He simply encouraged me to become a whole life learner of Christ and challenged our whole church to mature by simply stimulating our minds. The lessons taught and learned were challenging and deep enough to last days and weeks after they were delivered.

Aside from just preaching the Word of God, Kyle also lived it. Last year on the anniversary of my sister's death, Kyle was the one to reach out to me by taking me to lunch and simply listening for over an hour. It was this conversation that I will cherish the most when thinking about Kyle, and in this conversation is when I learned to take more steps in developing my faith. We spoke of many things, ranging from soccer to the sovereignty of God—none of which I could easily forget. Kyle's view of God and how He is involved in our lives was fresh and provides a solid foundation to build upon as I continue on my journey studying the scriptures.

I can honestly say that the course and direction of my life has been forever altered by Kyle Lake. He directed me to Truett Seminary and constantly challenged me to be a man of the faith. He was a talented athlete, a great friend, and an even better father. His approach to everything always showed Christ's love and grace, never condemnation or self-absorption. I am deeply grieved by the loss of my pastor, a mentor, and a close friend. I share in the grief just as our entire church community does and will carry a mark of humility in serving Christ by looking at Kyle's life as an example on what that looks like daily.

*Brady Herbert*

I was thrilled when I was contacted by Kyle to write the foreword to his latest book (Re)Understanding Prayer. When I got the advance manuscript and read through it, I can say I was caught off-guard as it really is the most raw and honest book on prayer I have ever read in my life. I initially wasn't sure how someone could write a book on prayer that isn't like other books – but Kyle was able to express such honesty and vulnerability that it literally did cause me to want to pray more and more honestly.

I am honored to be associated with Kyle, by being part of that book in the small way of doing the foreword. And God used Kyle to move in my heart and life as a result of his writing. I am thankful Kyle's heart for God and prayer will live on as many read his books in the years and years to come.

It is extremely hard to put into any words the deep feelings of sadness and sorrow that I have for Kyle's family and church at this time. All I can say is I am praying and Kyle has been used in my life and in my church's life as a result. His legacy will live on.

*Dan Kimball*

I did not know Kyle well, but my husband, Barry Couch, grew up with him in Tyler where they attended church together, so I had the opportunity to meet and talk with him several times, as we all attended Baylor at the same time. I also heard him preach once or twice, long before he pastored UBC, and I can still remember listening to him.

What is significant to me about Kyle is that while I only knew him through association and only interacted with him a handful of times, I remember him so well, which is telling of his presence. He seemed to have a unique magnetic quality about him, but in a very unassuming kind of way. There are many great people at Baylor, many Christians, of course, but Kyle stuck out. He had a sincerity about him that seemed unparalleled. Ten or more years later, I still remember that. I can only imagine how he blessed those who were privileged to know him well. His family is in our prayers.

*Sincerely Laurie Couch*

I attended UBC my first year at Baylor in 1997, which was also the very first year the church started. Chris Seay was the pastor at the time, along with the UBC band, now known as "The David Crowder Band," leading worship there. I remember being in a coed Bible study that Kyle led and I believe he and Jenn (his wife) were engaged at the time. All of the girls in the class were crushed when we found out that he was engaged.

Kyle had a genuineness about him that made him very approachable. I left UBC that next year, but wasn't surprised when I heard that he was the head pastor a year or two later. And when I found out that Kristi Fuller (Lake), who has become a sweet family friend in Arkansas, was his sister, it was even less of a surprise. God's personable hand has led me thus far in this journey of life, and what a blessedness it is to come to know Him better through the special people He puts along our path. Kyle Lake was one of them.

*Jenny Sessions*

One of many things that Kyle Lake showed to me is that relationships are key. He not only preached, but lived the message that building a relationship with someone is worth more than a thousand words. He taught our community of believers that we should love God as a united group and bring others into that. He lived this out in his life by building relationships everywhere he went. This is apparent when you look at all the people that this loss has affected. It is not just his family, close friends at UBC, but every person he came in contact with. He was full of life, always smiling, and ready to be your friend. He was truly a unique, authentic individual, and I can say nothing but good of him. I came to UBC my freshman year in 2002 and fell in love with the church

and the honest love of God. Kyle was behind that, and his passion for people and he Lord showed through. He also made you feel very special and encouraged very Sunday and every day in between. I baby-sit Kyle and Jen's kids often and I will never forget the last time that I spoke with him. Kyle and Jen had gone to something at church, and, while they were gone, I cleaned up the kitchen a little and emptied the dishwasher. When they got home, Kyle noticed this and gave me a huge hug, and, with a smile on his face, said, "We love Meg, don't we Jen!" Jen laughed and said, "Meg, that was Kyle's job!" Kyle was full of laughter and jokes and always made you smile when he entered a room because you knew he was up to no good with a mischievous look on his face. I will remember the legacy of Kyle Lake and everything he has done for me and my church. I loved him and will miss him greatly, but I know that he is in a better place, smiling down on us.

*Meg Robinson*

Kyle spoke at our church camp this past summer. I go to First Baptist Church of Amarillo Texas. We went to California this year for Breakaway. Kyle is a major part of my fondest memories. He is the most laid back, easy-going speaker we have ever had. He brought us, now the senior class, closer together. My favorite thing about him though, was how he truly cares about each and every one of us as an individual. He is the first person who made me really think about attending Baylor. Until I met him, Baylor wasn't a possibility. Now, pretty deep into my senior year, I have been doing everything I can in my power to get in/find the money to go to BU, with Kyle's encouraging words in the back of my mind pushing me through it. It's also quite silly that I took his simple words straight to heart. He was standing with a few of my friends and me, when he simply stated, "God told me to tell y'all to go to Baylor." But somehow, I took that as a message from the Lord, and, if it had been said by anyone else, I would have just blown it off, but not since it was from Kyle's mouth. Everything he said to us at camp is buried deep in my heart. Kyle started my future for me. I planned on him being there, at Baylor, when I arrived, but I gather that that isn't what God had planned. Everything happens for a reason, which I can't quite find justification for yet, but somehow the next door shall be opened, Kyle turned the handle of my door to the future, I feel that God won't leave me hanging, I sure know Kyle had no intentions of that either.

*Whitney Sabert*

To the Lake and Gornto Families -

I'm writing this reflection to let you - Jen, Avery, Sutton, Jude, Scott, and others know how much Kyle changed and impacted my life. Like Kyle, I was raised in the belt buckle of the Bible Belt (yea, it's Tyler not Waco), and, after graduating, a Red Raider went on to Bear country. In 1998, I entered Baylor and quickly fell in love with UBC. I remember being a senior in high school and hearing my youth pastor talk about the coolest church ever where they sat on couches, lit candles, and cool bands banged trash can lids as they worshipped God.

I remember going to UBC in the fall of 1998 and quickly meeting Kyle. He was young, sincere, passionate, and had enough to light up a room. At the time, he was the community pastor and was always willing to meet me at the SUB for a Chick Fil-A. I think that first year I was in college, we went out to lunch probably every other week. I was at a hard place in my life. During the Fall of 1998, my girlfriend (at the time) had a psychotic break-down and was later diagnosed with schizophrenia. Kyle was there for me and loved and comforted me through that time. He was not just my pastor, but my counselor, mentor, and friend.

Kyle was also responsible for allowing me the room and freedom to begin to question my faith. Kyle provided a warm atmosphere to express doubt and saw that as a large part of faith. I remember Kyle had written a quote in Latin by some famous monk on his office wall that has stuck with me to this day, "Follow God and do what you want to do". This quote gave me a sense of freedom and a

breath of fresh air from the mundane ritual that my faith had become. Kyle started a theology group called the Inklings that met in the UBC lobby. We smoked cigars and debated theology. I'll always remember that time of my life as the beginning of my faith becoming my own, and of all the people that led me down that journey, no one is more prominent in my mind than Kyle.

It was during the following year that Kyle took on the head pastorate role at UBC. It was rare for a Sunday to go by that I did not gain some insight on some aspect of my faith that was solidified, challenged, or purged as a result of my time in prayer and worship listening to Kyle and Dave. Of all the things that Kyle taught me, the one that I have walked away with and try to keep in mind daily is this: there is no such thing as sacred and secular. Kyle lived that, and I saw it in him. He taught by example that we do not compartmentalize our faith to church, prayer, bible study, ect... but that we can find God in everything - the sunset, playing soccer, watching Pleasantville (one of Kyle's favorites), eating at Vitek's, or smoking a stoogie.

Breaking down that sacred/secular dichotomy was the legacy that Kyle gave to me. I felt the freedom to live a life that meant following God to the fullest capacity of my abilities and doing what I truly desired. Kyle turned me on to the postmodern mindset, as he brought in wonderful guest lecturers to explain this new way of thinking. He showed me how to find God in the movies, how truth is created and lived out in community, and how the Infinite can never truly be understood by the finite. The pressure was off, yet I was spurred on to love God even more.

Kyle's passion for faith and church did not stop impacting my life when I left Waco. He hooked me up with his brother-in-law, Scott, which led me to Journey. It was obvious from my first encounter with Scott that Kyle and he were more than just relatives and college buddies; but these guys were soul mates. They share the same love, passion, and desire for others and God. Scott also enhanced this idea that God was found in life's mundane as well as magnificent moments.

Jen, Avery, Sutton, and Jude, your father and husband was a great man. He knew how to get the most out every moment. He always exemplified living in the present, the here-and-now, that is such a rare trait. The beauty about living in the moment is that you can see God, be with others, and be real. You know what it means to be attuned to the beauty of the world. I see this same rare trait in your uncle and brother, Scott. Glean this from him and be with it. I know I am not the only one that sees this connection. Scott taught me the many things that Kyle did, and I know that he can share these with you guys.

You will always be in my prayers and thank you for sharing this man with me and with the thousands of others that he influenced.

*Pax et bonum*

*Jonathan Ridenour*

The first time I ever met Kyle Lake was in the Castellaw Communications Building in some speech class when we were both students at Baylor. He was one of those guys who just looked cool, so I thought..."Hey, that guy looks pretty cool and he's got really cool hair. Since this is a speech class and chances are I am going to have to do some speech related stuff... I might as well do some "speeching" with that guy." The next thing I know we become pals, and, before I know it, we are both graduated.

We enjoyed a growing friendship over the next few years and then one day I'm taking the month of August to help get the UBC building ready for it's grand opening just before welcome week. Kyle conveniently misses quite a bit of the actual sweat and hard labor since he is hanging out in the Caymen Islands. However, true to his cool self with his cool hair... he slips in to town and back to UBC just before the grand opening with some special gifts for some of his co-laborers that can only be found in places like the Caymens and maybe Cuba. As we enjoyed the fruits of our labors I remember sitting on the finished stage at UBC covered by a big rug on the floor that we snuck out

of one of the Baylor warehouses in the back of my pickup truck and is still there to this day. It was late on a Saturday night and the next day was the first service in the UBC building. Kyle and I were the last ones in the place. We just sat on the stage... on the permanently borrowed rug... and looked around the room that would be filled with people the next morning ready to worship in this new place called their church home. We sat and prayed for people that would enter that sacred space on the corner of 17th and Dutton. We prayed and asked God to meet with people in this place from all over the states... all over the world. We prayed that in this very room people's lives would be changed and transformed by the person and power of Jesus. We prayed that community and worship and laughter and searching and love and questioning and singing and thinking and communion and stillness and loudness and repentance and hope and joy and grace and forgiveness and the things of God would be found in this room. Indeed it has. And it shall continue among the people of UBC. For these are the things that Kyle and I prayed for that night... and it has and will continue to come to pass.

On Saturday, October 29th, Kyle and his family enjoyed the Baylor parade with my family. I will never forget the cool-guy handshake--pull into a hug--and "Hey, Bro...what's up!" that Kyle gave me when our paths crossed once again... this time for the last time on this earth. We stood side by side and enjoyed being in a special place that allowed our friendship to begin some twelve years earlier. I will remember Kyle smiling as Sutton and Jude racing around in their flip flops and cool hair just like their dad's as they scurried for the candy that was thrown from the floats and cars in the parade. It was a beautiful day with our families. It was a holy and special few hours together that I did not realize until after they had passed. What a gift of a morning God gave me that day. What a gift of a day that so many of his family and friends could enjoy such a wonderful day on that Saturday in the fall.

When I heard the news about Kyle's death and how it occurred, I was reminded of how another of my heroes named Thomas Merton died on December 10, 1968. He too

was accidentally electrocuted. However, his life and legacy continue to impact the world through his writings and the footprints that he has left. In a devotional book that is filled with Merton excerpts from his many journals, I read these words from October 30th that seem to express some of my heart and

emotions that stir within me...

"Prayer is all I have left--and patient, humble (if possible) obedience to God's will. One thing is certain: I do not possess my answers ready at hand in myself. (It almost seems an axiom that a solitary should be one who has his own answers...) But I cannot simply seek them from others either. The problem is in learning to go for some time, perhaps for long periods, with no answer!!"

--Thomas Merton, End of 1965 v. 347-348

Indeed...I wonder how long we will have to go with no answer as to why all this took place. These are days we can echo the words of Job when he surely yelled out in pain, "Even though You slay me, yet will I trust You, God!" However long the period is, I am grateful that God allowed Kyle Lake to walk this earth. I am thankful that I was privileged to know him and call him my friend. He is a man who loves Jesus and loved his wife and children. He loved the church and lived the Gospel well among believers and those yet to believe. I look forward to the words of Ecclesiastes 3:11 coming clear in time...

"God has made everything beautiful in its time. God has also set eternity in the hearts of people; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

God, I pray you will make beauty come from these ashes in your time. Amen

*David Rogers*

LOVE GOD. In the 21 years of my existence, I have never known anyone who lived, to the “t,” according to his or her beliefs... until I met Kyle Lake. Whether Kyle was giving a sermon, playing soccer, or playing hide-and-seek with his kids, authenticity flowed from his every action. For Kyle, the kingdom of heaven and eternal life were present realities. As one friend eloquently said, the line between here and there was very blurry for Kyle. Kyle’s love for God was this authentic relationship with his Creator IN THIS LIFE. He showed each of us at University Baptist Church to embrace our relationship with God and to love our Creator because eternal life begins now.

EMBRACE BEAUTY. One of my friends at Baylor recently introduced me to the idea of pastors being poets. A poet can see a field of flowers or watch the ebb and flow of the ocean and make the flowers or the sound of the ocean come to life in new and exciting ways. A poet can take an everyday experience and show the beauty of this experience in totally new light. Kyle had this ability. He took reading and understanding scripture, the mundane activities of life, watching movies, listening to music, etc. and breathed new life into them. Kyle not only showed the beauty of our world to UBC, he showed us that we should embrace this beauty.

LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST. From the designer jeans and shoes, tight t-shirt, British “fo-hawk,” Volkswagen Passat, to a smile that lights up the room, on first impression, you knew how Kyle lived: to the fullest. Of course, we all knew Kyle was a bit on the “metro-sexual” side, but even he knew this. He embraced it. Kyle once talked about how his daughter can only do things “full tilt.” She does not know how to fake it. When she is happy, she embraces her happiness, and you know when she is happy. When she is angry, unfortunately, she embraces this too, and you REALLY know when she is angry. I think Avery received this gene from Kyle. He too was not a good faker. He was Kyle Lake through and through. He embraced his Kyle-ness and lived as best he could. He encouraged each of us individually and the UBC community to embrace our “-ness,” and, in this embrace, to live as best we can.

LOVE GOD. EMBRACE BEAUTY. AND LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST. Around UBC, these three phrases, with which Kyle ended every sermon, are now famous words. Our own benediction. While important separately, they cannot exist without one another: to love God is to embrace beauty is to live life to the fullest. Thank you for showing us this, Kyle. Peace...

*Harris Bechtol*

Dear Jennifer,

You don’t know me, but I’m a fellow ministry wife. My husband and I serve with the International Mission Board in Birmingham, England among Bangladeshi Muslims. My brother and his wife attended Baylor, though they now live in Greenville. They still have many friends in Waco, and they passed along a prayer request regarding your family and the loss of your husband.

My heart is broken for you and the pain you must be experiencing, and I feel the Lord has prompted me to write to you. Know that you are in my prayers, and that if word has reached me in England, there are likely thousands around the world who are lifting you and your family before the Father.

By the time you receive this letter, the initial shock of it all is probably wearing off. The funeral is over and things are starting to settle down. Although, I’m sure life is never “settled” when you have a five-year-old and three-year-old twins! I’m sure it is difficult enough to grieve, and yet you probably feel the pressure of helping your children to understand as best they can at their age and to grieve in their own ways. As I write to you, I share in your tears, though I will never fully know the extent of your pain. Nonetheless, this is my prayer for you:

Our Father in Heaven,

With heavy heart I come to you now on behalf of my sister in Jesus, Jennifer, and her precious children, Avery, Sutton and Jude. Father, they have experienced an incredible loss. We can’t even

begin to understand why you allowed Jennifer's husband Kyle, the kids' father, to be taken from them so early in life. But Father, we acknowledge that You are Sovereign. And we know that there are some things we will never understand. Some things we don't like. And some things just don't seem fair, like Kyle's death. In fact, sometimes we feel downright angry that You would allow someone so in love with You, someone doing so much to further Your Kingdom on earth, to be taken from us. We don't understand, Lord. But Lord, we love you anyway. You can see from the beginning of time to the end of time. You can see the big picture, though we cannot. We acknowledge you as the Master Weaver, who is weaving a beautiful tapestry of our lives, a magnificent work of art that testifies of Your mercy, Your grace and Your love.

Lord, we don't understand. But we trust that, just as You promise in Jeremiah 29:11, you have plans for Jennifer and the children, plans to prosper them and plans to give them a hope and a future. God, You promise in Romans 8:28 that all things work together for the good of those who love You and are called according to Your purpose. We know that Jennifer is called by You. She loves You. So Father, I pray that You would work even this situation for her good and for the good of her boys.

Father God, though I'm not there and I don't know for sure, I can imagine that in some ways, Jennifer feels weak. She is probably physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted. So I pray that you would be very real to her. Lord, I pray that Your grace would be sufficient for Jennifer, that Your power would be made perfect during this time of weakness. As difficult as it is, I pray that Jennifer would delight in the weakness, in the difficulties, for when she is weak, You are strong (2 Cor 12:8-10).

I pray that Jennifer would truly be able to cast her cares on You and that You would sustain her (Psalm 55:22). Lord, as we humans so often tend to do, I pray that Jennifer would not try to take back the burdens she has cast upon You. I pray she would cast all of her anxiety on You, because You care for Jennifer, Avery, Sutton and Jude. I pray that Jennifer would come to You, and that in her weariness You would take her burden upon Yourself and give her rest (Matthew 11:28).

Lord, I pray that You would meet all of this precious family's needs—physical, spiritual, mental, psychological—according to Your glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). Lord, protect Jennifer from bitterness. Lord, we know that even You were angry. Lord, we know that anger is a normal part of the grieving process, so even when Jennifer is angry about this situation, I pray that You help her through it. Help her to be angry without sinning. Guard her heart and keep her from bitterness. Help her to trust in Your sovereignty.

Lord God, place someone special in Jennifer's life—someone she can talk to and share with. Give her someone who can just listen and not try to fix things. Someone whose shoulder she can cry on. Someone she can share her burdens with. Someone that she doesn't feel like she has to impress—someone with whom she can really let down her hair—someone she can be real and authentic with. Lord, give her a friend who will love her unconditionally. Lord, thank You in advance for providing a special friend to help Jennifer through this.

Lord God, I pray that You would place special people in the life of the Lake family—people who will help them, encourage them, support them, and minister to them during this time. Father, I pray that You would meet their needs. Provide for them and sustain them.

Father, I pray there would be no regrets on Jennifer's part regarding things she wishes she had said or had not said, or things she wishes she had done or had not done. At times like this we often blame ourselves for things. Lord, I pray You would spare Jennifer that pain on top of everything else. Instead, help her to focus on all the good times, all the good memories. Lord, be Jennifer's encouragement, her strength, her peace, her comfort, her All in All.

At this time, I pray that Jennifer would truly know You as the Prince of Peace, that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard her heart and her mind in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:7).

Lord, I specifically pray for the children. Avery, Sutton and Jude are at such a tender age. It isn't easy for them to understand the concept of death at this age. Lord, they may not yet comprehend

that their Daddy isn't coming back. Father, work in their young hearts helping them to understand, on their level, that their Daddy is with You in heaven, that He is safe and that they will see him again some day. Lord, I pray that You would comfort the children. Lord, give Avery, Sutton and Jude peace. Father, I pray that they grieve in healthy ways and that they are able to talk about their feelings. Lord, I pray that You give Jennifer the right words to help her children understand. Give her an extra measure of wisdom and insight as she does her best to be there for them and help them through this time. Lord, I pray that You would give wisdom and insight to others who are important in their lives—grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends. Lord, I pray You protect Avery, Sutton and Jude. Keep them safe. I pray You keep them from bitterness. Lord, I pray that You help them to deal with this situation in such a way that it doesn't affect their behavior in negative ways.

Lord, I hurt for Avery, Sutton and Jude, knowing that their Daddy won't be there for them. I know how important a father's influence is. But Lord, You are in control. You have their best in mind. You can be their Father. You can be all that they need. Place other father-type figures in their lives. I pray for a good support network—granddads, uncles, friends—who can help with things that fathers are better at.

Father, I know that this story may get lots of media attention. So, I pray for protection for Jennifer and the children. If and when Jennifer must speak, I pray that You would speak for her and through her. Give her the strength that she needs to face whomever and whatever she must face. Lord, be sufficient for Jennifer. Supply her needs. I pray the media would be sensitive to the needs and the hurt of this family and give them room to breathe and grieve.

In so many ways, I'm not even sure what or how to pray Lord. I just know that my heart is broken over the hurt this family must be experiencing right now, Lord. I praise You because Your Word says that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express (Romans 8:26)." So Holy spirit, thank You for helping me in my weakness. Thank You for interceding for the Lake family when I don't know what to pray for them.

Lord, I also thank You and praise You in advance for all the good things that will come from this situation. Lord, we pray that You receive the glory and honor. You are a mighty God. You love us and You have our best in mind. Even when we don't understand or see it, You are at work for our good. So thank You, Lord, for how You are going to work through this family and in the life of this family. We give You the glory.

In the name of Jesus,  
Amen.

Lamentations 3:21-26

21 Yet this I call to mind

and therefore I have hope:

22 Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,  
for his compassions never fail.

23 They are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.

24 I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;  
therefore I will wait for him."

25 The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;

26 it is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the LORD.

Praying for you and your family. *Your Sister in Jesus*

*Laura Langley*