

## PASTOR GARY, THE DICTIONARY AND ME!

I'd like to share this morning one of my experiences on a Sunday morning with Pastor Gary. We all know how Gary loves words being the scholar that he is; big words, unusual words (at least to me), foreign words, and the list goes on.

On this particular Sunday morning, it was my turn to interpret the service for our deaf and hearing impaired group. I was somewhat nervous. I was still learning Gary's style of delivery. So, I said a quick "Cover me" prayer as he started delivering the message, gave the group a "Got it together" smile and started signing. It was going well. I was in synch with Gary and I thought, "Great, and I started relaxing."

Suddenly, I hear the word FRAPPE, and I'm wondering why in the world is Gary talking about a dessert in the middle of the sermon. Then I panicked, as I thought, "Oh no! Maybe he switched to the Garden of Eden and I missed the switch!"

"So much for my smugness", I thought. Well, needless to say, I froze! My mind was in a whirl. I was trying to pull it all together as I glanced at Gary, then back to them. "How do I explain a dessert thrown in the middle of the sermon let alone know the sign for FRAPPE, and I couldn't even think how to finger spell it to them. And to make matters worse, Gary continued to preach.

I fell apart and my expression showed it. But this time, the group are looking at me and signing, "WHAT?" "WHAT?" Now they are looking at me then looking at Gary with confusion resulting from failure to understand my frozen state. I finally pull myself together and signed, "Sorry, I lost part of the message and it threw me off!" I continued on.

I pondered over that word for several weeks, because in my dictionary it implied a dessert. I wanted to ask Gary what the word meant, but not wanting to appear ignorant, I assured myself he'd probably never use it again and I kept quiet.

Several weeks later the word FRAPPE appeared in Gary's sermon again. It caught me off guard, but I quickly recovered and continued signing. Again I looked it up in the dictionary; still said a dessert. I decided my pastor was losing it, not me, and he needed a vacation.

Yes, it happen one more time, but let me tell you, I'd had it! I went to Gary straight after the sermon that third time and said, "Gary, I have a very important question to ask you, and don't you dare laugh! what in the world does the word FRAPPE mean?"

Yes, he did, he laughed and replied, "It is FRAPPED KATIE, NOT FRAPPE, and it means (are you ready for this) falling apart. I told him he owed me one because for the last three sermons, I lived out the meaning of the word.

My experience was productive though, I asked Gary to please give me his sermon notes ahead of time, so I could be prepared and ask question about anything I didn't understand. He agreed and the notes given ahead of time worked out very well.

Later, I thank Gary and told him the experience caused me to ask informative question that helped me avoid "falling apart" or being FRAPPED in the future, and we both had a good laugh. Pastor Gary taught me a deep appreciation for the dictionary and edited one of my booklets, *Passing Through The Doors*. I think Gary went through several red pencils editing the booklet for the returned pages were full of red

marked words and explanations, but the last story came back with only one red mark and his red pencil attached!

Thank you Pastor Gary for encouraging me to continue writing and to not give up. Thank you for telling me that if I was serious about writing, you would help me and the red marks would start disappearing—they did and I am still writing.