

# MAUPIN MESSAGE

## North Carolina Coach Talks Boldly About Jesus

For this month's Maupin Message, I've chosen to reprint an article written about the coach of this year's NCAA Men's Basketball runner-up. Note the influence his coaches had on his path to Jesus. That's what you are all about as you partner with the ministry of FCA through your prayers and giving. To God be the glory.

From The Daily Citizen:

North Carolina's Hubert Davis is in his first season as the Tar Heels' head coach, though he served as an assistant between 2012 and 2020. He also played at Chapel Hill between 1988 and 1992 for legendary coach Dean Smith.

In some ways, Coach Davis brings to mind Coach John Wooden – UCLA's "Wizard of Westwood" who won ten national titles – but was even better known for the Christian love and care he demonstrated towards his players.

"One of the things that I do is pray all of the time that Jesus would put good people in my kids' life, like Coach Smith, Coach Guthridge and Coach Williams," Davis said. "People that genuinely care for you, that there's no hidden agenda, they're genuinely on your side."

Does it surprise you that a head coach of a secular university would be so bold as to talk about Jesus during a press conference?

It turns out Coach Davis experienced a crisis of his childhood Christian faith when his mother died while he was in high school. He entered the University of North Carolina as an angry man – bitter that God robbed him of the mother he loved at such a formative time of his life.

Coach Dean Smith and his assistants urged all their players to go to church – to aim higher than a basketball hoop and consider that maybe there were things more important than sports.

"I went to church, only because Coach Smith and Coach Guthridge encouraged me to go to church, I started to understand what my mom was talking about. I started to understand the sacrifice that Jesus made for me and how much He loves me, and two days before my junior year of college, I became a Christian."

He continued: "Instead of being upset that Jesus has taken away the most beautiful person in my life in my mom, I'm thankful every day that He gave me the best that I could ever have for 16 years. My faith in Christ is the foundation of who I am. When I say that I will walk this path in my own shoes and my personality, my own shoes and my personality is my faith."

It's always refreshing to see a fellow believer speak so candidly about what has shaped and defined them. One gets the impression the usual antagonists from groups like the Freedom from Religion Foundation who regularly antagonize Christians in the public square, don't intimidate Coach Davis.

"My faith and foundation is firmly in my relationship with Jesus," he said.

"It just is. My mom used to always say that Jesus had a plan for me, plans for hope and a future, plans not to harm you, plans to prosper you —

Jeremiah 29:11."

