

December 7, 1998

To My Students,

The purpose of this letter is to tell you what a privilege it has been for me to have you in my class this semester and to share some things that are on my heart. First, I want you to know how much I care about you and your future careers. Your career is one of the most important things in your life. Please remember and take to heart that God has given everyone certain talents and abilities. Some of you are using those talents and abilities to their potential, but some of you are not. Whatever you choose to do, you need to do the best that you can and give it your all. Each of you has a promising future, yet all any of us are given is the day in which we live. Therefore, living each day to the fullest is so important.

Please accept my apology as I feel that I have not given you the time that I should have. This has been an extremely trying semester for me with my treatments and the loss of my voice. Thank you for your understanding and patience with me. Teaching is very important to me, but more so, *you* are the most important.

As all of you know, I am battling breast cancer. This is a very serious disease and it has been very difficult for me. I do not choose to have this and do not want it, but I know that God is in complete control of my life. If it were not for His strength and His peace that He gives me, I could not face each day. Please understand that I am not trying to force my beliefs on you or to sway your thoughts, I am only sharing with you what God has done in my life. As I said, all we are given is today, so I try to make the most of each day. God loves me and He loves you...

*"For God so loved the world that He sent His only Son  
that we should not perish but have everlasting life."*

- John 3:16

I guess when you have something wonderful you want to share it with everyone you come in contact with. That is how I feel about my relationship with Jesus, I hope that each of you has, or will, find that same peace that only He can give. No, I do not choose to be sick, but I know God has a purpose for me and my life and all I can do is trust in Him.

Finally, I want each of you to know that I am here for you if you ever need anyone to talk to. Please feel free to call me, come by my office, or my home. Do not ever feel that it is an imposition or that I would not feel like talking to you.

In closing, I want to thank you for the many kind, encouraging words and prayers that you have spoken. It means more to me than you will ever know. If our paths do not cross again, I hope that I have given you something that will benefit you in your career and life. I wish each of you a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lucy Shackelford