

"It's a tough life," Louie DeFeo wrote, "very few people get out of it alive." Louie kept a book of his favorite sayings, and they reveal as much about him as they do of the world around him.

Louie never went to war, but wars raged about him all his life. And for every battle he won a victory. Driven out of business, he would start up again. Belittled for his nationality, he remained intensely patriotic. Told that his son was too handicapped for the handicap school, he fought for justice. Betrayed by people, he grew independent. Leaving law school before he got his degree, he learned from every book that fell into his hands and from every person who stood before him. For every battle he won a victory. He wrote, "As little as I am and as big as you are, I am as big as you are as little as I am."

Now Louie has fought his final battle. He raged against his sickness, and his final enemy was death. Lest we think Louie lost this battle, let us call to mind the words from the Book of Wisdom: "The souls of the just seemed in the view of the foolish to be dead. But they are at peace. Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself."

God tried Louie like gold in the furnace, and he has been purified. He has become a sacrificial offering to God the most high. Louie's life is a story of victory, and so is his death.

Jesus said it was the will of the Father that he should lose nothing of what the Father gave him. The Father gave Jesus Louie. And we are confident that Jesus will raise him up.

Louie has given us an example of how to fight our battles. May his death inspire us to seek justice, wisdom, experience, and resurrection--in spite of all the odds.

Well, once again, Louie wrote it best: "Early to bed and early to rise, may make a man healthy, but if he expects to become wealthy and wise he will have to do a lot of hustling between snoozes."