

Lefty Bogolia Eulogy

01/28/2017

Hello, my name is Mike, and I am one of Lefty's friends. Nikki and the family kindly asked me to speak to you today about her Dad.

When I was a younger man, I recall being at a funeral. One thing that made an impression on me was a bagpipe. The sound of a bagpipe is curiously somber and vaulted at the same time. It really set a tone for the service. Afterwards, I approached the player and said to him "Thank you, that was outstanding. I'd like to have something similar one day, at my own funeral." He looked at me, and said "That's nice, son - but remember, your funeral will be for the living, not for you."

I was at another memorial a few months back for a friend of mine, named John. He and I went back several years, and I think I have a pretty good idea of who he is. His Service was unsettling to me, however.

John belongs to Jesus, and his life reflected that fact. One by one, people approached the lectern and relayed stories about how John had helped them, how he had treated them well. These things are good, yet the sad part is that I am sure John would have clarified things for everyone. John knew that if there was anything truly good to be found in him and his actions, the sole source would be Jesus in him. Everyone was making a big deal about John, but I believe he and I would have agreed the big deal should have been about Who made him who he is.

You might also notice my use of present, not past terms in talking about John. I did not say "Who John was", but instead I say "Who John is". I will speak of Lefty in the same way.

The reason for this is while John and Lefty - specifically their Eternal souls which are not presently with us - are quite existing and alive with the Lord, because they are His followers. Scripture tells believers "to be absent of the body is to be present with the Lord", and promises that "He who believes in the Lord has everlasting life".

Recalling, remembering, telling about the person we love is good. Believer's Eulogies and Sermons will have a common Theme, but they serve their Theme

differently. They look at the same Common Theme - Jesus - yet from two different approaches. A Christian Eulogy should expound a follower's life and show how that life was impacted by the truth of Jesus. A Christian funeral Sermon will show Jesus calling us, should show us why we need Him.

All of that said, I do have words about Lefty and his exhibition of Jesus through him.

Critics of the Faith might say "For someone who claims to be a Christian, his behavior says otherwise". That could be true, and it could be a damning indictment - if the issue was settled only on one's behavior. It is also true that a genuine follower of Jesus can have flaws. What all of us should strive to see, however, is how God sees the issue. His first question is, "Do you believe my Son Jesus and do you belong to Him?"

Those belonging to Jesus are works in progress. One huge change that overcomes a Christian is he now belongs to God, and the training begins. Those who take up Jesus' offer are in fact sold into service to Him. The great news is that He is a great Friend, a Friend Who will no longer allow us settle to live for ourselves. We now belong to Him, and He teaches us how to put Father God and others first. And, He understands that is counter to our old nature, and makes ample reasons and opportunities to accept this new nature, through Him.

Spending enough time with someone who belongs to Jesus, we have an opportunity to see the evidence of this. I believe I saw this confirmed through the years with Lefty.

There are many of us here who belong to Jesus, and who are friends of Lefty. We have seen him in action, and we know something of his character. Preparing to speak to you, I polled some of our mutual friends and asked "What are the core things about Lefty that strike you?"

Many answers, yet a common theme.

Caring, and God fearing

Blessed with perseverance

Described by his friends with appreciation and love

Adventurous, above his disability

A role model I thought of while studying the Book of Job

Ready to serve others, and be used as Father required

A positive attitude - always doing "Excellent!"

Faced adversity in stride; counted it Joy.

Alert to, and appreciative of, God's Blessings

Compassionate towards others in need; a servant

If you are a student of the Bible, you will recognize passages that assure us this will be seen in a person who belongs to Jesus. In shorthand, much of this is ascribed to the Fruits of the Spirit. Specifically, the Fruits of the Spirit refer to the consequences of the Holy Spirit given to you, when you concede that Jesus is right, that you need Him, and you receive Forgiveness. The personality of the Spirit plays out in a cooperative follower, here in Scripture, called "Fruits":

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

Consider the list of answers from those who knew Lefty, and we see the obvious correlation. Lefty was a mere human like the rest of us. He had his days where he chose to exhibit more of his sinful self than the Spirit in him. Yet, with his life he showed the infusion of God's Spirit. This Spirit is call the surety, or the guarantee, of our belonging to Jesus. Besides having repentance as well as asking Jesus to be Saved from Judgement, it is the closest way we can suppose if we or others belong to the Lord. And when He is in you, and through you, and about you - you increasingly succumb to His reality as He plays out in your life.

I can stand here today and comfortably say three things about Lefty, and I ask you to consider:

1. As we find good things about Lefty, it is the result of Christ's Work and the Holy Spirit
2. Lefty's eternal soul, the eternal part we all possess, belongs to Jesus, and is with Jesus today
3. Lefty was unique, but he was not special. Any of us can have what Jesus gave to him.

Praise God, and thank you.