

John Miller Memorial

John 3:16

By Scott Huckaby

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Carolyn asked me to share a brief message at Uncle John's memorial service. And I'm honored to do so.

I got to know Uncle John from the many family get-togethers over the years and the fact that his twin brother is my father-in-law. As twins, Jim and John were very close even dressing alike as kids. We all know the story of how Grandmother resolved the problem of them not having two identical clean pairs of socks by mixing them up so they both wore two different socks.

When they grew up, Jim and John both had similar careers serving in the Air Force together during the Korean War, getting engineering degrees at the University of Texas, and working in the aerospace industry. Over the years the brothers kept in regular touch with each other despite not always living close by.

No matter where Uncle John lived, loved the outdoors and thus spent a lot of time camping. This eventually led him to Carolyn who shared His love of the outdoors. I understand that John and Carolyn especially loved the time they spent together on beaches in South Padre Island and San Diego. Many of us here, Teresa and myself included, also share John's love of the outdoors. When I consider this, I think one reason the outdoors appeals to us so much is that we can be closer to the Lord when we are surrounded by His creation and not being so distracted by the creation of men. God wants us to be close to Him, that is why He made provision for us to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

I fully expect to see Uncle John again in heaven because of his choice of a favorite Bible verse. As most of you know, Teresa and I built a chapel that we use for weddings, events, and a weekly Bible study that I lead. When the chapel was under construction and dried-in, Teresa put out the word to friends and family that we wanted to post everyone's favorite Bible verse on the walls so that we could be surrounded by God's Word. After the favorite Bible verses were posted, we installed the insulation and sheet rock. Uncle John contributed his favorite verse as John 3:16 – *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

John 3:16 is probably the most popular favorite Bible verse of Christians because it is such a succinct statement of the good news about Jesus Christ. This verse is also a promise direct from God that all anyone need do to spend eternity with Him is believe in Jesus.

The Bible reveals God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Son came into our world as one of us, taking on a human body. Jesus did this for the expressed purpose of revealing the Father to us and to pay the penalty for our unrighteousness before Him. All of us fall far short of the glory of God due to our inherent selfishness. The seriousness of our sin before God was made clear by the blood sacrifices required by His Law given to Moses. Jesus as God the Son lived a sinless life and became the ultimate sacrifice for us in His death on the cross.

So, trusting in Jesus Christ as God's provision for forgiveness of our sins is essential to have everlasting life. But there is more good news... Jesus allowed His mortal life to end on our behalf but He didn't stay dead. He rose from the dead taking on an eternal, glorified body that will never grow old or die. Jesus became the first-fruits of the resurrection and thus His risen body was the prototype of the immortal body we can look forward to in eternity.

God's offer of everlasting life is available to everyone. But the ball is in our court to respond to His provision by believing it. Everyone must make a personal decision to trust in Jesus Christ or not. Because of Uncle John's favorite verse, I am convinced he made the decision to embrace Jesus as his Savior and I'll see him in heaven sporting a new, glorified body. I'm also sure that Uncle John wants to see all of you there as well because of the poem Carolyn found on John's computer.

The poem is titled, *To Those I Loved* and reads as follows:

To those I loved and those who loved me -
When I am gone, release me and let me go.
Grieve for me for a little while if you must -
Then let your grief be comforted by God's trust.
I thank you for the love you each have shown -
But now it will be the time that I have to travel alone.

Passing of this tired physical body was always planned -

It signifies just the beginning of the next great
adventure.

On my journey I will have so many things to see and do

So, you mustn't tie yourself to me with tears.

Just be thankful for the beautiful years we shared our love;

And you can only guess how much you gave me in
happiness.

And besides it's only for a short time that we must part -

So, bless the memories that remain within your heart.

Though my body will be gone, my eternal spirit lives -

I won't be far away, for everlasting life goes on.

And if you listen closely with your heart -

You'll hear my love around you with the sounds of the
soft rustling of the leaves, and in the songs of the birds.

Then, when you too must come this way all alone -

I'll greet you with a smile and say: "Welcome Home."

As you know, we will be reconvening at Picacho Peak
Park for a Celebration of Life gathering where we can all
share our memories of John. I'm going to lead us in a
prayer then we'll have some time here for any of you
who'd like to share your thoughts of John. Let's pray...

Heavenly Father, thank you for Uncle John's life and the
time you've given us to spend with him. And thank you
most for the promise of everlasting life made possible by
Jesus Christ. That promise really helps us deal with our
loss and the reminder of our own mortal condition. Please
help us all adjust to being without John and help us cope
with our loss by growing closer to You. As we share our
memories of John, please help us remember how You
have blessed us through him. We ask all these things in
the wonderful name of Jesus Christ, Amen.