

Shelly Fields - Memorial Service
Thoughts from Mike Baird
8 August 2008

- Since I've known that I would be speaking today I've pondered what I would say
 - I knew Shelly, but not real well
 - I knew Shelly in the last several years of her life while she was battling cancer
 - We met at her house a few times and spoke about things such as her family and since I am a bishop we spoke of religious things as well
- As I was pondering what to say I found myself asking these questions. Perhaps you too have asked similar questions over the past few days:
 - Shelly who are you?
 - What were you like before cancer became your intimate companion?
 - What will the memories that have been shared today or the pictures I have seen tell me about you?
 - Shelly, you are gone from this earth life now. Are you never to be seen again other than in photographs?
 - Is this all that is left when someone passes away?
 - Is someone's life just the sum of some photographs and memories and the legacy and effect one has on others?
 - Memories are good
 - They can inspire us and give us strenght
 - Words of a hymn often sung at funerals read:
"When such a friend from us departs, we hold forever in our hearts a sweet and hallowed memory"
 - Dean Hall's words and experiences shared by others of Shelly's life reminded of enduring scenes of Shelly. Scenes painted in the minds of those who knew her. These are the sweet and hallowed memories we can hold.

- The ancient Bible Prophet Job asked the question I asked differently, he asked:
 “If a man die, shall he live again?” (Job 14:14.)
- Some of us have perhaps pondered that question as I have
 - Maybe before or perhaps in the time since Shelly has passed away.
 - Maybe we framed the question with different words
 - Or perhaps some of us have pondered this question in contemplating our own passing. When a loved one passes away it sometimes makes you stop and think
 - What is important?
 - What happens after death?
- I have thought about it.
 - Does someone who passes on live on as more than reflections in our lives?
- As I pondered these things the words of a scripture came to me: "Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God"
- Those words are an affirmation Shelly has great worth in the sight of God
- It is my belief that we all have great worth in God's sight, just as our own children have great worth in our sight, yet perhaps more
- It is my belief and hope that because of the worth we have in God's sight that death is not the end of our journey
- I would like to share a couple thoughts about our life's journey
- The first thought from a favorite poem from the poet William Wordsworth

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 —William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimation of Immortality"

A second thought about our life's journey from the Bible:

- The Bible Prophet Job answered his own question of "If a man die, shall he live again" later when he said:
For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:
And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God (Job 19:25-26)
- Jesus Christ himself said:
"I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25)

The witnesses of prophets and the words of the Savior Jesus Christ give me the belief, hope and faith that that the bands of death have been broken

They give me belief, hope and faith that though separated now by death from loved ones, one day we may be reunited with them.

It is my affirmation to you that our loved ones live on as more than just memories painted with colors beautiful in our minds or as reflections in our lives

Truly as the poet said, "The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, has elsewhere its setting".

These thoughts I leave with you in the name of the Savior Jesus Christ, Amen