

Steve Quilter Funeral Remarks

Bishop Cameron Ford, August 8, 2015

We, the human family –the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve, are called upon to go through so much of pain, suffering, and heartache in our lives. It can often be so overwhelming that the suffering and the heartache are all that we can focus on, all that we can see. Because of this we sometimes forget that there is also so much of joy and beauty in the world; the hope and potential in the face of a newborn baby, the breathtaking beauty of the mountains that surround us, or the inspiring lifelong devotion of a husband and wife.

As I have reflected on the life of my brother Steve Quilter, I have been reminded of the good and the beautiful. I know that he was not a perfect man, but I also know that he was a caring, loving man. Viewed from the perspective of my 14 years of knowing Brother Quilter, I know without question that he loved his family deeply. But I also know that his love extended well beyond the circle of his family. He has touched so many lives. He was a big man, with an even bigger heart. He cared for and loved my two boys when they were in the nursery. He cared for and mentored all of my scouts as they went to him for rank advancements. He loved and cared for the members of our ward through countless acts of service. The last time I heard Steve's voice was about a week before his death when he called to ask me as a new bishop to visit a member of our ward that he was concerned about. He was a disciple of Jesus Christ, and as I remember his caring eyes, and his happy face I cannot help but feel a reflection of the love of the Savior.

As can happen for all of us, I believe that Steve has experienced, and will continue to experience in the afterlife, the "touch of the Masters hand". One of my favorite poems written by *Myra 'Brooks' Welch* speaks of this experience.

The Touch Of The Master's Hand

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste his time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bid, good friends?" he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?
One dollar! Only one? And who'll make it two?
Two dollars, once. And three!

Three dollars, once. And three dollars, twice.
And going, and going, " but no...
From the back of the room a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow.

And wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As caroling angels sing.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"
As he held it up with the bow.

"One thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand dollars, and three!
Three thousand, once. And three thousand, twice.
And going, and gone!" said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We don't quite understand
What changed its worth." Swift came the reply,
"'Twas the touch of the Master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd
Much like this old violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine.
A game, and he travels on.
He's going once, and going twice.
And going, and almost gone.

But the Master comes, and the thoughtless crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change that is wrought,
By the touch of the Master's hand.

I testify of the Master. He has touched my life in a profound way. I know that He touched Steve's life, and I know that He can touch yours. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He is our beginning, our middle, and our end; through his miraculous power He "created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. ", and by the word of His power "worlds without number" have been created. He is the light and the life of the world. His love, His commandments, and His atonement are the fruit of the tree of life. As in Lehi's dream, if we will but press forward and partake, our souls will be filled with "exceedingly great joy'. If we will partake, we will be able to experience peace in this life and see the incredible beauty of the roses, despite all of the thorns of life. I know that because of Him, and because of sacred covenants that He has provided in His Holy Temples, that Gayla and Steve, and their children can be an eternal family. I know that because of the Savior we will see Brother Quilter again in the flesh in the day of resurrection. We often speak in wonder about how the miracle of the resurrection could happen. And yet, we are surrounded daily by miracles of a similar magnitude that we take for granted because of their sheer number. President Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles compared the miracle of the resurrection with the miracle of birth:

"The Lord who created us in the first place surely has power to do it again. The same necessary elements now in our bodies will still be available—at His command. The same unique genetic code now embedded in each of our living cells will still be available to format new ones then. The miracle of the resurrection, wondrous as it will be, is marvelously matched by the miracle of our creation in the first place."

In closing, I will share one last thought from President Nelson.

"Meanwhile, we who tarry here have a few precious moments remaining "to prepare to meet God." (Alma 34:32.) Unfinished business is our worst business. Perpetual procrastination must yield to perceptive preparation. Today we have a little more time to bless others—time to be

kinder, more compassionate, quicker to thank and slower to scold, more generous in sharing, more gracious in caring.”

I pray that we will ever be preparing for that day when we will return to meet our Maker, as our Brother Steve has just so joyfully done, and I do so in the sacred name of our Maker, Jesus Christ. Amen