

First, let me thank you all for coming today to honor my father and pay your respects. On behalf of my mother, Lisa, Robyn and the rest of the Dyer clan, please know that your presence today is very special and appreciated.

As I went about trying to put my thoughts together for the memorial today, it was a first. I have always been blessed with the gift of gab and although I give many presentations and teach often through out the year, I have never had to prepare my comments word for word. Today, I was pretty sure that it was going to take my very best just to be able to get through my comments and I must therefore resort to reading, and for that I apologize in advance. I figure, better to say what needs to be said then to get choked up the whole time.

I guess one of the perks of growing up as a “PAK” that’s short for Probate Attorney’s Kid (in honor of Pastor Leuning, who is the “king of Acronyms”) is that you have the privilege of attending more than your fair share of funerals. Despite the number, there is no way to prepare for the loss of someone that is special to you. In our office, it seems that we have been in mourning for the past month with the passing of Suleiman Saigh, the father of my good friend and associate Chuck Saigh. Our attempts to support Chuck and his family through the loss of Sam has been more than returned during our time of loss and we thank you for everything, that really does mean all of you (that is a pretty big thank you if you know the Saigh clan). It helps to know that Sam and my father are enjoying a drink together in heaven.

As I began to prepare for my remarks, I had a hard time figuring out how one goes about talking about a person who has been such a big part of shaping your life; you attempt to describe one particular area only to leave out the so many others? I am blessed to have had such a relationship with my father and would not have it any other way. I tried to organize my thoughts in chronological order but after writing four pages of notes, I was concerned I might lose some of you after the first hour. So, I figured the best way to describe my father would be through the attributes that I most admired about him and hope and pray that I can model them in my own life.

Love – there was no one with a bigger heart than my father. There was no individual that I can think of that my father did not get along with, he was just one of those souls that always found the good in people. He truly modeled unconditional love to me, my family and all of my friends. I was certain of this when my father agreed to represent me and two of my friends for J walking in high school. My father did not treat this as some petty crime, as far as I was concerned he was going to take this to the highest Court if necessary.

Joy – My father was a man that was full of Joy. We have shared many of the pictures of my father from over the years, and although most people have to be directed to smile in pictures, my father was not one that often had to be directed to this. His smile was contagious and he was never one to complain. Even in the last few years when his health was declining it was very rare that my father would complain about his situation and he always was quick to speak joy into another spirit.

Peace – My father was always at peace and desired it for all. Growing up, my sister and I did not always “get along”. In fact, like all good siblings, we fought like cats and dogs. My father’s favorite saying was “Someday your mother and I are not going to be around and it will only be the two of you, so you better get along.” He was always the consummate peacemaker.

Patience – During my youth, my father always made of point to be at the important events and games. This was not the best part for my father. The important time to him was the time that he got to listen to each and every detail that my sister or I wanted to share regarding the events of the day. I am certain there never has been nor likely will there ever be someone that is such an unselfish listener as my father. He never skimmed on listening to all of the gory details, regardless of how boring it might have been.

Kindness – My father would give you the shirt off of his own back if you asked for it. My father helped several of my mother’s family to immigrate to the United States. When they would relocate, my father was the first to volunteer to begin teaching them English. Both my Aunt Dara and Cousin Payow studied cosmetology while they stayed with my parents after coming to the US from Thailand. I am sure that my father was able to translate all of the terms for bob cut, teasing and any other hair style that was in at that time. His kindness seemed endless.

Faithfulness - If you ever discussed religion with my father you would know that he fancied himself a free thinker, never to be restricted to a denomination or particular Christian faith.. My father never forced his views of religion on anyone, let along his own children. When my second set of parents, Bill and Cathy McCullough, were kind enough to drag me along with them to church with my good friend, Doug, my Dad never discouraged my pursuit to reach my own conclusions about God. My father completely embodied the tenants of one of his passions, Freemasonry, which requires the belief in a Supreme Being, but does not endorse one religion over another. I have many a wonderful memories of discussions regarding religion with my father. On several occasion he specifically assured me that he had accepted Christ as his savior and that he would see me in Heaven. How much sweeter a statement can a son who adores his father ask for.

Gentleness - My father was not the disciplinarian in our family; my mother had that well under control, in fact I am pretty sure she could still do some pretty good damage today if called into action. There are so few memories of my father ever getting angry at my sister or I for any reason. Whether we were “borrowing” dimes from his parking meter stash to use for the ice cream truck or completely totaling the old pickup truck on a camping trip with Shawn and Butch, my father never raised his voice or showed anger. He was a gentle man through and through.

Although my father would never have been one to identify all of these traits as “fruits of the spirit” as described in Galatians 5:22, I believe them to be. I know that my father was a blessed man and that he was spiritual in all things he did.

As I wrap up my remarks today, I wanted to share with you all one more story. Two weeks before my father passed away, my wife and my kids, my sister, my mother in law and father in law, and the Bone family were able to take my father on a cruise. I name all that accompanied us on the cruise because it really was a joint effort and my father referred to us as “his crew.” In any event, in the weeks leading up to the cruise, both my father and mother requested that I reconsider taking my father along with us on the cruise because of the difficulty he was having with his mobility. Fortunately for me, once in a great while I can be stubborn, and I did not give in and my father came along with us on what would be his final voyage. He got to enjoy sun on the deck, the fresh sea air in his face, a massage, great meals, some gambling, and some wonderful company if I don’t say so myself. There could be no better gift that my father or God could have given to us now in retrospect and I am thankful for our time together.

Upon my father’s return from the cruise he was very tired and his condition began to rapidly decline. As with the rest of my father’s life, God provided once again. My cousin, Tim Marderosian, was able to provide respite care to my father. Tim was an answer to prayer and I am not sure he knows that. Tim was also with my father when he passed away and was there to help my mom through such a traumatic event. Timmy, I hope you will always know how much I appreciate all that you gave my father in his last few weeks of life; to you I am forever indebted and thank you.

I know that this day is a celebration of my father’s life, but I would be remiss if I did not recognize my mother for all of the care that she provided my father in the last several years of his life. She has been devoted to my father for some 46 years and I know that the last several years have been hard. Mom I am certain and I hope that you know, that we would not have been blessed with Dad’s presence without your tireless efforts. Know that he is at rest in heaven and will be watching over you until the time comes for you to meet again.

There were so many people that were important to my father and in order to make sure we finish this service before sundown, I know I cannot recognize them all. I did want to make sure I recognized the wonderful group of people that make up our law firm. This last week has not been very pleasant, but I have not received anything but support from all of the Dyer & Ferris team. I wanted to thank our family friend, Bill Gumbert with Messinger’s mortuary; Bill, I know that this is your profession but I appreciate your treating us like family. My father made so many long time friends/family through work - Aunt Kay, Aunt Billie, Wayne Clouser, Nancy Elliston, Greg & Peg Dovico, and Jim & Cristy Bone, thank you all. I know his time in Eastern Star was precious as well Betty and Fred Rupert, Linda Beck and Susan Warren, thank you for giving him his time in the sun.

Finally, before I close, I wanted to thank Pastor Leuning and my Desert Springs family. My family has called Desert Springs our Church home for over 16 years. Our children and Robyn and I have grown up here. From my family and myself I cannot express how much I appreciate and have a deep and heartfelt appreciation for your prayers and the support that you have provided to us during this difficult time.

To all, thank you once again on behalf of my mother and my family, for coming and “celebrating my father, Charles J. Dyer’s life.”