

VIRGINIA WHITE MEMORIAL SVC
AZALEA BAPTIST CHURCH
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.
THURSDAY, 1-9-92, 7:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTION:

Obituary, if not given before.

Purpose of our gathering here tonight:

I. FIRST

to celebrate the MEMORIES OF THE LIVING of
VIRGINIA WHITE as a devoted daughter, wife,
mother, grandmother, and great grandmother to her
family;
as a gracious lady of her Virginia heritage;
as a distinguished graduate of her universities;
as a model member of her churches;
as a lover of music and flowers and all things
beautiful;
as a consecrated Christian and Servant of God;
and much, much more which limitations of time
prohibit our mentioning in detail.

We who were privileged to know Virginia for a
long time, as long as 40 years and more for some
of us, know her to have lived a very full,
exciting, joyful, active, and rewarding life.
She passed away to be with her Lord and her loved
ones who preceeded her, on Sunday Dec. 29th, at
the Tyrone Medical Inn here in St. Petersburg.

We gather here in this church which Virginia
and her husband loved so much, because we are
neighbors and friends of the family and brothers
and sisters in Christ. As we did for her husband
just a few months ago, we want to take this
opportunity to show our great respect for
Virginia's dedicated life. We also want to extend
our hand of friendship and caring to this fine
family and to say to you that we share in your
affliction and grief which you have been bearing
for several months and years now. As Christians
we seek to bear one another's burdens,

but no one who has not gone through what you have experienced can possibly fully understand or appreciate what it is like. We have all experienced our own trials, however, and we can assure you that God's grace is sufficient for every need, and he has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us. We do share your burdens and sorrows, and in a very real sense your loss is indeed ours.

II. SECOND

But perhaps the greatest purpose of our gathering here tonight is to CONSECRATE OURSELVES TO THE CHRISTIAN IDEALS FOR WHICH THIS GRACIOUS LADY LIVED.

A. As Virginia was the pillar of a stable Christian family, we can consecrate ourselves to the promotion of stable Christian families. One of the sad commentaries on our times is the fact that so many families are not stable. In some instances one or both of the parents are absent, or ineffective, or incompetent, or without a good role model in their mothers and fathers. Some parents are into drugs, crime, vice, prison, or aids, possibly mentally and/or emotionally not capable of being a good parent. Some teen-age parents are little more than children themselves, and their parents, or relatives, or communities, or societies are either unable or unwilling to help them.

Virginia White had the background, training, example, and intelligence to be a good dependable mother. True, she was fortunate to have had the advantages and opportunities she had. But the point is she worked hard and applied herself to take advantage of her opportunities, educational and otherwise. We live in a land of opportunity, but it is sad that so many do not apply themselves to take advantage of their opportunities. We need to consecrate ourselves to determine to take full advantage of all of our opportunities.

There are certain principles of effective parenting which can be learned if one has the desire.

I am told that one principle of effective parenting which Cameron and Virginia always practiced in their home was this: Whatever their personal differences or arguments might have been, they never discussed or revealed these things before the children. These three sons tell me that they never observed or heard their parents arguing or disputing with each other in the presence of their children or any other persons. Some of us may think this is remarkable, but it should be a common practice between husband and wife all the time. This is one thing that would contribute as much as anything else to a stable home, and it is something every couple can do if they will try. Nobody can say a good word for bitter, public arguments and fights. They are destructive, terrible, and horrible. On the contrary, private, rational, non-emotional discussions in love and mutual respect can be constructive, and can provide a stable basis for unified action for every married couple. This is another ideal to be zealously followed.

This does not mean that both the husband and the wife can not be themselves, and be their own person, in the marriage relationship. Virginia was certainly her own person. She was well-educated and well-traveled. She learned early in her life to think for herself. She loved her family and showed no preferential treatment for any one of her sons over another.

Anyone who loves music and flowers cannot go far astray in life. I challenge you to disprove this. Virginia played the piano for churches from Appamatox ~~to Birmingham~~ to Atlanta, and to St. Petersburg. She had a beautiful voice and was a great asset to any choir during most of her life. She grew all kinds of beautiful flowers in her yard (or "Garden" as the British would say), and these she gladly shared with others in the church sanctuary and in other ways. As I say, one who loves the good and beautiful can never be satisfied with that which is bad and ugly. You simply cannot be angry, spiteful, and hateful while you are playing Rachmaninoff,

Chopin, or Beethoven, or admiring a beautiful floral arrangement, can you? Think about it.

B. In addition to the ideal of a STABLE CHRISTIAN HOME, we must also consider the ideal of a SHINING CHRISTIAN FAITH, as we gather tonight. One cannot think of the living of Virginia White without thinking of her shining Christian faith. And to this ideal we are all called to consecrate ourselves in this memorial service.

On many occasions and in many ways Virginia confessed her personal faith in the Lord Jesus as her Savior and Master. And she was not only a believer; she was a DOER OF THE WORD, as the Lord's brother challenged Christians to be. When a Sunday School class needed a teacher,

Virginia was there.

When the choir needed a voice, Virginia was there. When the nursery needed a worker so parents could worship and grow spiritually, Virginia was there. When young people needed a sponsor, Virginia was there.

When a worthy cause needed help, Virginia was there. When a mission needed support, Virginia was there. Whenever and wherever there was a bonafide need, Virginia was there with her voice, her talent, her energy, and her purse. Would that the cause of Christ were blessed by such willing, intelligent, capable, and talented volunteers on every hand today!

Virginia has an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God even now. John Bunyan, in his immortal Pilgrim's Progress, describes the reception given Christian pilgrims when they reached the gates of the celestial city. He wrote about how several of the King's messengers came out to meet them. These messengers were clothed in white and shining raiment, and their melodious voices echoed throughout heaven. They greeted the pilgrims at the gate. Over the gate was written: "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." On December 29th, the bells of heaven rang for Virginia White, and the King's messengers said: "Enter into the joy of your Lord."

Rev. Horace Sams, Jr., Ph.D.

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