

Jim LaFevers Eulogy

Let me start by saying that I'm writing this with a heavy heart. On Monday, February the 3rd, 2003, my brother died. While we may not have been brothers by blood, we were definitely brothers by love.

There are many things that come to mind when we think of Jim.

He was many things to many people... he was a son, husband, father, brother, cousin, friend, co-worker... but no matter what Jim was to us, he was always a caring, loving and spiritual man.

You definitely knew where you stood with Jim. He didn't pull any punches and he didn't mix any words... he spoke his heart and he spoke it loud and clear. If you were confused or misunderstood anything Jim said to you, then you must not have been listening very closely. He let you know where you stood with him and he rarely sugarcoated anything.

I respected and loved Jim for many things, but this attribute, always grounded me whenever I was with him.

Too often in life people go through the paces, saying what they think you want to hear and not speaking their true feelings. Jim never had that problem. He always spoke from his heart.

Get angry, get happy or get out, you definitely knew what terms you were on with Jimbo. If you don't love it, you have to at least **RESPECT** that in a man!

I can honestly say I've never met another man that was as clear in his beliefs and feelings as Jim was. I know that 99% of the nights Jim laid his head down to rest; it was with a clear conscience and with no regrets.

Over the next few days, weeks, months and years, we'll all talk about Jim in some manner. We'll talk about how he couldn't say hello without wrapping his arms around you and giving you a hug.

We'll talk about the times we had with Jim when he had us rolling on the floor in laughter. We'll talk about how emotional Jim got when he spoke about Linda, Becky, Scott or Melissa.

"Remember last summer when Jim said..." "Remember that time Jim was playing cards and he..." "Remember Jim's face that night when..." "Remember when Jim was so happy about..."

REMEMBER!!! ALWAYS REMEMBER!

All of us that knew Jim will take those memories with us for the rest of our lives. As sad as the death of a loved one is to us, we must always remember that they live inside us forever.

We're never ever really alone. Everyone that's come and gone before us, everyone that's touched us, everyone that we've loved and lost... they're never truly gone. They live on in our hearts, in our minds, our memories and in our souls!

Does losing Jim hurt... **HELL YES** it hurts. It's supposed to hurt.

It hurts because we loved him so much. It hurts because we want him back so bad we can taste him on our lips and feel him just beyond our fingertips.

It hurts because when our loved ones die, **a little piece of us dies with them.**

So what's our solace in all of this? Why does God put us through this pain?

He makes us deal with these feelings, this anger and sadness, because it's this time of grieving that cements their memories into our hearts. It's kind of like a strange initiation. It's almost like we have to go through the agonizing pain of losing someone to realize that they have passed on to God's house.

Maybe it's God's way of saying "I know your pain"...
"I've given that ultimate sacrifice myself"

It's a lot like giving birth. You have to go through the tormenting pain before you can reap the sweet joy and love of your new arrival. Jim has gone through the re-birth and is now at home with the lord.

I'm reminded of a saying on an old Marine Corps poster...
"We never promised you a rose garden!"

Anyone worth loving... anyone worthy of our hearts and souls, our passions and emotions... demands it from us that we work hard at keeping them as close to us as possible. Physically, mentally and spiritually.

Think about anyone that you've ever truly loved. How often do we take them for granted while their alive? How often do we brush each other off, thinking... I'll give them a call *tomorrow*. I'll swing by their house on the way home from work *tomorrow*.

We need to remember to make that phone call... **TODAY!**
We need to force ourselves to stop by and see them... **TODAY!**
We need to make the effort to spend time with them... **TODAY!**

Because if we've ever doubted it before, if we've ever taken it for granted, God has shown us with Jim, that we're never... ever... promised tomorrow!

I know that right now, our worlds are a lot emptier with Jim gone. It's a darker, more somber place and it feels like something's missing. It feels like something's been stolen from us.

Just as I hear myself say those things, I think of what Jim would have wanted for us. He *would* want us to grieve his passing. He *would* want us to gather together and say our goodbyes. He *would* want us to feel the pain from the void that's been caused from him being taken away from us.

But I also know this. **Jim wants us to carry on too.**

He wants us to remember all of the good times we had with him.

He wants us to go through the rest of our lives remembering him, loving him and missing him. He wants us to remember his love, caring and joy for us.

Our lives have been saddened by Jim's passing, we know that.

But Jim has given us something special. He's given us each other. He's given us our love for him, a love that unites and binds us all and we'll carry his love with us for eternity.

In one way or another, he's brought us all together, in so many ways. Jim touched each of our lives and made us better people because we knew him.

Jim may be gone from this earthly world. But Jim will live forever in our hearts, our minds and our souls.

Behind me lies a vessel in a silver casket. It's that vessel, his earthly body, which carried everything that made Jim who and what he was.

His vessel was no longer needed. It helped to do the job it was built and intended for. It assisted Jim in carrying out his duties while here with us on earth. God let's us keep our loved one's vessels, so that we may morn our loss and assist us in getting some kind of closure with their being called home.

Today... Friday, February 7th, 2003 we bury the vessel; we commit back to the earth the body that carried Jim's essence. But Jim's spirit was summoned home the afternoon of Monday, February 3rd by the lord almighty.

Peace be with you brother. We love you and we miss you, but we know you are here watching over us right now.

Keep your loving arms open, waiting to give us our next hug, when next we meet again.

In loving memory of my confidante, my friend, my **BROTHER**...

Jim LaFevers

(Author: Bruce F. Morris)