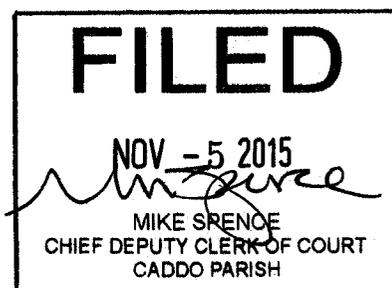


Eulogy to Jim Caldwell



3) When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4) What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5) For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6) Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of the hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

Psalms 8:3-6

Jim Caldwell was all about Family.

His personal life, by some people's standards, was quiet, spent at home, centered around his family.

He didn't spend his time, after hours, at the Petroleum Club, the University Club, or the Shreveport Club. He didn't spend his off hours playing golf at the Country Club. Nor drinking cocktails with fellow barristers. No, for Jim, the precious few hours not spent working or in church, were dedicated to life with his precious son, Jonathan, beautiful daughter, Christy, son-in-law Jonathan Wilson, granddaughter, Caroline Wilson, and dedicated wife, Debbie.

Sharing his life philosophy, learned through walking through over six decades of the trials of this life; discussing the issues of the day at the breakfast table or dinner table; sharing his State of the Law Practice Address with his wife, Debbie, with whom he shared everything-- on a daily basis.

His definition of over-the-top recreation, was putting in new tiles in the family living room. At home. Laying the tiles. Himself. Meticulously. One by one. Each tile perfectly and precisely set in proper position, angle, location.

His conversations with his family were not always, or even predominantly verbal. Rather his most profound conversations were the messages spoken by his life:

His attention to detail, painstaking workmanship and the meticulous precision he demonstrated to his daughter.

The indomitable work ethic: The courage to fight fatigue, overcome exhaustion and war against weariness, all the way to the end, the lessons he demonstrated with his life's labors, to his son.

The absolute integrity, relentless righteousness, and inextinguishable honor with which he inspired his wife. Integrity which he extended towards the courts, opposing counsel, and above all, his own clients.

Jim was all about Family. Jim was also all about Faith. The Psalmist records the magnificence of God's creation; God's decree that placed man over God's creation; and the Revelation, startling upon reflection, that God has made us a "little lower than the angels." As the Psalmist observes with exhilaration: "What is man that your are mindful of him?"

For some, humanity's prominent place in God's scheme of things is a little bit dizzying; fills us with a sense of self importance; gives rise to pride.

This tendency is particularly pronounced, often, in professionals, the successful and Lawyers. After all, who else other than legal professionals, can make a six or seven figure income or more; drive expensive, foreign made sports cars; and win Summary Judgments against unrepresented pro se litigants or underrepresented citizens.

Perhaps all of us are at risk of this prideful predisposition: because of success, position, or education, we became too smart, too sophisticated, too self satisfied for Religion. Too Intelligent to honor the simple, homespun Christian Faith, that sustained America when 90% of the population made its living off the land, on farms, on ranches, hunting, fishing, gathering, carrying firewood— and making quilts to survive the winter.

Jim, at least the last four years of his life, was not too successful, sophisticated or self satisfied, for Faith. He faithfully attended Noel Methodist in Highland; sitting in the same pew, in the same section of the church, in the same service, every Sunday; congratulating the preacher on the merit of his remarks after every sermon; singing loudly from the hymnal for every hymn; welcoming every new visitor; embracing every member.

As his wife Debbie put it, Jim was Saved about four years ago. As Debbie says, God through his Holy Ghost came into his life and gave Jim so much wisdom and knowledge in such a short amount of time. God used his Holy Spirit in an amazing way to show Jim so many things so quickly; gave Jim a servant's heart, to serve his family, to serve his clients, to serve justice. As Jim's wife summarizes, Jim loved God

Jim was all about Family. Jim was all about Faith. Jim was all about the Fight.

Jim spent the best part of his career representing victims of medical negligence. Which is a very expensive, laborious, exacting field of practice. The playing field, the battle field, the battleground is heavily tilted.

In one corner: multibillion dollar liability insurers, large medical corporations and aggressive lawyers.

In the other corner: A broken family. One secretary. A sparsely furnished office. A couple of word processors. A copy machine. A fraying Medical Dictionary. And Jim.

Debbie says, that Jim typed most of his own pleadings because if he signed his name to the pleading he wanted it to be right. He dotted every I, crossed every T, did his own research, worked often into the night, night after night. Not loud, ostentatious or demonstrative. But quiet, conscientious, diligent, persevering.

He fought the fight for decades. Not simply worked, but fought. Because in this area of the law there is always a disparity of resources, usually an uneven distribution of pain. There is always the fight against the agony of exhaustion, with which the enemy sometimes threatens to make cowards of us all.

On one side: seemingly unlimited resources, an abundance of corporate lawyers, the most expensive experts money can hire.

On the other side: A broken family. One secretary. A sparsely furnished office. A couple of word processors. A copy machine. A fraying Medical Dictionary. And Jim.

Debbie often commented to Jim that representing claimants in malpractice cases was a difficult way to make a living; She asked him why he chose this area of the law.

Jim's response?

Someone had to represent the little guy.

John Mulderich
November 4, 2015