

INVOCATION
BY
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UTSI MEMORIAL FOR DR. ROBERT YOUNG: November 16, 2006

Loving God, Heavenly Father, we know you are the giver of life and today we want thank you especially for the life of Dr. Robert Young.. Memories of him bless our lives. He touched us.

He was a blessing to his family, his church and this community of Tullahoma.

He was a blessing to the Arnold Engineering Development Center and especially to the University of Tennessee Space Institute. His brilliant mind and devotion to learning helped enormously to move us from a terrestrial age to a space age and it remains to be seen what is your ultimate will for this universe which we call "home".

May this service today be pleasing in your sight and may we grow to see you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow ~~your~~ your will more nearly as we live out the days of our life. This we pray in your Holy Name.

Amen

Dr. Robert Lyle Young
1925-2006
The Renaissance Man

The transitional movement in Europe between the medieval and the modern age is referred to as the renaissance era. We have lived through a transitional movement in our time from the terrestrial age to the space age and Bob Young was a pivotal leader in that transition. Thus: Robert Lyle Young, the Renaissance Man.

Many here have been much closer to that movement and to Bob Young than I. Bob was so easy to know and mixed so well with all of us that, for the most part, we gave little thought to the fact that we had living in our midst one of the most brilliant minds we will ever have the privilege to know. He was an aerospace giant. He could comfortably discuss with anyone in his field thermodynamics, aeronautics, astronautics and numerous other related subjects. He was in constant demand to serve on evaluation committees for accreditation at the greatest universities of our nation.

Robert Lyle Young was a vital link internationally in the transition from the terrestrial age to the space age. And yet he was even more – He truly was a renaissance man.

Bob could intelligentially discuss with you almost any subject you could imagine. Name it. Philosophy, ethics, theology, social values, education, politics, the Bible, Africa and on and on goes the list.

One of Bob's greatest assets was his ready wit and sense of humor.

This week one of his boys called Sara to inquire if Bob had special music which could be used in this service. Sara replied that Bob did have special music but she did not feel it could be used in this service because his favorite tune was –

“Come away with me Lucille in my merry Oldsmobile”

He went around the house humming this tune all the day.

The doctors told Sara a few weeks ago that Bob's health was failing. She and the family just hoped he could make it O.K. through the Holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas. So, what did Bob do? He died On Halloween.

When the doctor at Harton decided Bob should be airlifted to St. Thomas in Nashville, Sara told the doctors Bob would like that and wondered if he was alert enough to know what was happening. The doctors assured her that he was.

It was a special privilege for me to serve as interim pastor of this church, Bob's church, for a year. Every time I stood in this pulpit I was

aware that Bob was there, in the choir, sending out his moral support. After the service on Sunday Bob would seek me out and thank me for the message. One Sunday he said "That was a damn good sermon." For Bob, that was not profanity. It was his way of giving emphasis to what he was saying.

This Renaissance man will be greatly missed in this community, this church and his beloved Rotary Club.

On his 80th birthday John Quincy Adams the 6th president of the United States was asked how he was. He replied, "John Quincy Adams is quite well thank you. The house in which he lives is becoming dilapidated, it is tottering on its foundation. Time and seasons have nearly destroyed it. The roof is nearly worn out, the walls are pretty much shattered and it trembles in every wind."

"I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon but he himself is quite well, quite well."

Robert Lyle Young had to move out of the house in which he had lived for 81 years but with that brilliant mind still keen and intact. I think we can safely say that Robert Lyle Young is quite well, quite well.

Amen

DR. BILL M. STARNES

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