

MARGARET FINNEY

Eulogy by Thomas Coleman

Thank you God and thank you aunt Betty for this opportunity. It is an honor and a privilege to give this eulogy for Margaret Finney.

Margaret Finney, I love you and we all love you. Even though you are no longer physically present, your true life is everlasting and so is our love for you. We will love you until the day we are eventually reunited with you.

Until then, we will have our memories of you and of our relationship with you. Let us call upon God's spirit to descend upon us now and to rekindle in us those memories as well as our present experience of Margaret Finney.

Who was Margaret Finney? How does she live on in our memories?

She was a strong woman, a kind and gentle soul. She was full of love and joy. Margaret had a great sense of humor. She loved children; she loved animals; she loved all of God's creatures.

Margaret was a good Christian who often professed her love for God. She was a good mother and a wonderful grandmother. She was a survivor, a doer, a participator in life.

Margaret's life spanned a century. She saw it all. She experienced many major life transformations.

On a global scale, she was born near the turn of the century. Margaret witnessed startling changes:

When it came to transportation, she saw the horse and buggy change into automobile travel, then airplanes, then travel into outer space. With respect to communications, life went from radio, to telephones, to television. Margaret saw great social and political changes: from the coming and going of prohibition, to women getting the right to vote, to the emergence of the civil rights movement. On an economic level, she went through the roaring twenties, the depression, and several wars.

On a personal level:

Margaret got married, had children, and raised a family. Her family went from two people -- Margaret and Roy -- to a large family with three branches and many blossoms, all of whom are represented here today.

What is Margaret's message for us today?

Two months ago I asked her to share some words of wisdom. Here is what she said: "It's a good life, as long as you don't weaken."

Margaret is telling us to be strong: physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. We can look to her as an example of what that means:

- * Tell the truth.
- * Express love for God and for others.
- * Have compassion.
- * Let go of false pride.
- * Be the first to forgive.

Margaret would not want us to mourn for her. She would want us to show our truth faith and to celebrate her passing to eternal life.

Margaret loved Red Rose tea. As a sign of celebration on September 22 (Margaret's 100th birthday), many of us -- wherever we may be that day -- will display a symbol of our love by releasing a helium balloon with a Red Rose tea bag attached to it to wish her well.

Would all of those present who love Margaret Finney please stand and show your applause for a life well lived. [Standing ovation]

Margaret, you just got a standing ovation from a full house of well wishers.

Grandma, we love you.