

Ray Evans: A Life of Significance

From engaging in the culture wars with Sir Arvi Parbo and Hugh Morgan, while at WMC, to a gifted speechwriter and wordsmith, whose literary creations were permeated with the influence and language of the Bible and John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

To a man whose concern for the good of his fellow man and for society drove him to establish numerous organizations and think tanks, and to tirelessly and boldly stand up for common sense... there emerged at Neville Raymond Evan's funeral service, on Friday 27th June 2014, a picture of a man whose life was shaped by what Jesus described as the two greatest commandments, to love God and to love fellow mankind.

It was this love which the eulogy given by his five children revealed, and which at length painted a fuller picture of Ray, one which his public life and work, and his many colleagues and friends present at the service could not.

Ray Evans' life of significance was much more than his publicly visible activity and contribution to society, and the service made it obvious that it all flowed out of something greater. Ray Evans' love and concern for his wife and children and for his fellow man all clearly flowed out of his love for God.

He knew that man, having been made in the image of God, has an innate dignity, and that man is to take charge of the earth, tend and care for it. So, for example, he was quickly able to see through the nonsense of the climate change alarmists, knowing that any system which portrayed man as a nuisance and a pest and promoted excessive control of man (by big government), and undue restraint of his creative endeavours, was simply wrong, and therefore he could boldly stand up and say so.

What emerged mostly though about Ray Evans, and probably the main "significance" of his life of significance, was the love he had for his wife and children, and their deep love which flowed back to Ray.

I had only met Ray twice, and was representing my father Ron Manners at the funeral service, but having listened to eulogies from Ray's long-time friends, Hugh Morgan and Bob Day, I was greatly impressed, and would have liked to have known Ray more.

But then, listening to the eulogies from his five children (all read out by his eldest son with his siblings standing at his side), hearing of the positive and profound impact that this man had in the lives of his loved ones, showed Ray to be a man who loved deeply.

He was very much engaged in his children's and grandchildren's lives, and has made such an unshakeable and long-lasting impact in their lives, that from Ray's life has emerged probably his most significant contribution to society, his greatest legacy, a family moulded and influenced by the love of a husband and father.

Although I did not know Ray well, it was impossible not to share the shedding of a tear with his beloved wife and children as they mourned.

The big thing that struck me was how funerals have the earth shattering way of bringing us to our senses, stripping away the non-essentials which cloud our lives and focussing our minds on what really matters in life.

When all is said and done, although all else is and can be meaningful, satisfying and world changing, without the balance, without including and prioritising God and family, one tends to lose ones true eternal significance. This funeral service revealed that Ray's was a life of significance because he had sought this balance.

Craig Manners

27/6/14