

Puppy Love

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Out of the Mouth Of Babes

Being a veterinarian I had been called to examine a ten-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's pet parents, Ron, his wife Lisa, and their little boy Shane, were all very attached to Belker, and they were hoping for a miracle.

I examined Belker and found that he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything more for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog at their home.

As we made arrangements, Ron and Lisa told me they thought it would be good for six-year-old Shane to observe the procedure. They felt as though Shane might learn something from the experience.

The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. The young boy, Shane seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time that I wondered if he understood what was going on. Within minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away.

The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulties or confusion. We sat together for a long while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives. Shane, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why."

Startled, we all turned to him. What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation. It has changed the way I try to live.

He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life - like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?" The six-year-old continued, "Well, dogs already know how to do that, so they don't have to stay as long."

Ever wonder?

Pope Francis: "Heaven is open to all creatures, and they will be vested with the joy and love of God, without limits."

Billy Graham: "I think God will have prepared everything for our perfect happiness. If it takes my dog being in heaven, I believe he'll be there."

Will Rogers: "If there are no dogs in heaven, then I want to go where they went."

Mark Twain: "Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in."



AKC releases an official response...

Few things in life are more powerful than the human-canine bond, and we firmly believe that all dogs are worthy of an eternity of affection and happiness. We applaud Pope Francis for reminding our global community that our canine companions deserve the utmost love, care and respect both here on earth and whatever may come next.

Why do we love dogs so much?

Because they are living proof that in this world, good still exists.