

REFLECTIONS

January 8, 2006

**Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?**
Isaiah 43:18-19

A World of Possibility

We all look forward to the day when life is happy, when our bodies are stronger, when our children are wiser, when...well, you fill in the blank. Yet it surprises me how much we cling to the past. The past is more real than the future, yet it is more unreachable. We can reach back only in reminiscence. But we reach forward toward what can be. One is a memory the other is a dream. One is an experience lived, the other is destination pursued.

The past, though, has its role to play. From the past we learn what the future might be. We learn what we want to eliminate and what to make better, and we learn what we want to keep and to reproduce. From the past we learn what makes us feel good and what hurts. We learn the ecstasy of joy and the agony of sorrow. We learn what perishes and what is enduring. We learn about shallowness and about deepness. We learn the devastation of hate and the inspiration of love.

The past is a base to build from, but the past is not a place we can live. We live only in the fleeting present toward an ever changing future. Our lives have purpose and the purpose is to make a different tomorrow. It is disturbing if not sad how few of us are clear about the difference that we are called to make. The primary focus of our lives seems to be making a living, a legacy, and a comfortable retirement. These may be worthy goals, but they are means to an end not an end themselves.

Each day God brings something new into our lives. He opens doors by introducing us to new people; He opens doors when situations change; and He opens doors as our wisdom increases. God invites us to walk through the doors He opens into a world of possibility—possibility that springs from the past, points toward the future, and lives in the fleeting presence of today. That's where He calls us to live. Our call to make a difference is more than a dream. It is a way of life that summons us to view each day as a new beginning sharing our joy and peace with those around us. It is also the way of life that will bring the days of happiness that we have been longing to find.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +