



# ***REFLECTIONS***

July 11, 2010

Adapted from the Archives of March 12, 2006

**Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.**

*Mark 13:8*

## **Birth Pains**

The tears I shed were not because a game was lost or because a goal went unmet. Rather the tears were shed because a season of life had come to an end. It was one we all loved so much—a time when we watched a young man grow in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. It was a time rich with blessing.

Grief is normal when endings come. We all go through them. We feel empty when something ends. Endings can sink us into a barren state that feels so lost, so alone. No matter if it is a death, a job change, a broken relationship, or a high school athletic career, life is a series of endings and beginnings and those are linked by transitions.

William Bridges has written a bestselling book on the subject. The book, entitled *Transitions*, should have a place in every library. He writes that life is a series of transitions—bridges between endings and new beginnings. He says beginnings are born only after endings have come. Transitions are the times in between when we feel the hollowness of grief that produces such emotions as anger, loss, fear, regret, denial, and guilt, before acceptance can come.

Endings disrupt the rhythm of life, often leaving a loss of identity or purpose. In the ensuing transitions, activities are changed, places traveled are different, and relationships are altered. But transitions provide a time for reflection—a time to retreat into solitude to relive the memories, and to pray for the unveiling of sunrises that will give birth to new days.

The Apostles experienced it. They retreated into solitude and grieved when Jesus died. Then the Lord returned to them and opened new doors. “Go into all the world and make disciples...,” He said. The ending they grieved became the incubator for blossoms of a new season in their lives—one that spread the Gospel around the world.

Some seasons of life are rich blessings as my grandson’s basketball was for me back then. It still lives in my memory even as I witnessed the birth of a new season. The birth pains went away in the course of transition. And the sun has risen to illumine the blossoms of a new season that will bring blessings of its own. God works that way.

*“You are the light of the world.”*

*Richard* +

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