

REFLECTIONS

January 4, 2009

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Philippians 1:20

Blessing of Courage

Gracious God, you have blessed me so. I have recounted those many blessings over the years—especially the blessing of family. My family is blessed by love.

Love is felt in the warm glow in our hearts with thoughts of one another whether in each others' presence or not. It is a glow produced by caring and by sacrifice—both giving and receiving.

Love looks to the good that defines the character; and it forgives for wrongs done without condoning the acts. The blessing of family love runs so deeply. But I am also struck by another blessing today.

Today begins the fifth year for these weekly Reflections. Each week you, dear Lord, have patiently helped me craft a message that has reached into the lives of those you have chosen to receive it. I am struck by the courage you gave me to write the first one and the audacity to share it with others.

The blessing of courage allowed me to set aside the fear of human judgment—judgment of the message or of the manner the words were crafted. It has been a blessing of freedom that allowed me to use the gifts you gave me before the world began, and to reveal a part of who you made me to be that I once concealed in fear of disapproval.

Today, gracious and loving God, I give you thanks for the courage you have given. I ask for continuing courage to share the messages you give me each week, and that each of them will serve to shape lives of those who walk this earth and mold the lives of those even yet unborn.

All of us have been brought into this world for your good purpose. I pray, loving God, that you may grant the blessing of courage to those that read this prayer. I ask that each of them will reach beyond their fears to become who you made them to be—to use the giftedness that is buried in their souls; gifts they may have previously feared to share. May they receive the gratification from their gifts that Reflections has given to me. And may their gifts serve as instruments that reflect the glory of your Kingdom.

And thank you for your son, Jesus the Christ, in whose name I pray. Amen.

“You are the light of the world,”

Richard +

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