

# ***REFLECTIONS***

December 2, 2007

**to God, my joy and my delight.  
I will praise you with the harp,  
O God, my God.**

*Psalms 43:4*

## **Decorating for Christmas**

Most people knew my dad as a business man. But those close to him were also aware of his other talents. One of those was art. In his youth and again later in his life, Daddy's brush painted colorful scenes that hang today in the homes of our family. He also hand-painted a set of China that we have divided as keepsakes in his memory. His artistic talent extended to decoration, and he especially enjoyed decorating for Christmas.

Every year he would come up with something different. One of the first trees I helped decorate as a boy was one we covered with a mix from Ivory soap. Daddy made bowls of thick lather by whipping the soap with a mix master as one would cream. Then he allowed me to help him spread it along the limbs of the tree until it assumed the wintry look of a snow laden evergreen pine. The tree looked great, and also I had fun.

There were other memorable trees too. One year, Daddy built a three dimensional Christmas tree skeleton. He draped cotton runners on each layer of the skeletal branches around the tree. Lights and ornaments were hung from the soft white carpet and bright confetti sprinkled over it produced the glistening of snow on a sunny day.

Decorating for Christmas was an opportunity for Daddy to praise God through a talent he did not use every day. And from that praise my dad found the delight and joy of Christmas.

My dad's experience was much like that of King David. We know David as a king of Israel. He was the conqueror of a giant, a warrior, a poet, and the root of the royal line of Jesus. And David was also a gifted musician. From the strings of his harp beautiful sounds resonated through the air. He played in praise to God with a talent he did not use every day. And from that praise King David found delight and joy.

Not all of us are blessed with artistic gifts like my dad or King David. But all of us do have the ability to praise God in the same heartfelt way they did. Decorating for Christmas is one of those ways regardless of our creative abilities. Decorating for Christmas is more than a seasonal chore to meet the expectations of the neighborhood, or to abide with family tradition. Decorating for Christmas is a way we can praise God in a manner we don't use every day.

And like my dad, we may just discover the delight and joy of Christmas.

*"You are the light of the world,"*

*Richard* +

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