

REFLECTIONS

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They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings — and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers."

Revelation 17:14

Flames of War

There he stood behind the podium in full dress uniform. A face disfigured by the flames of war did not dampen his spirit as he spoke to a crowd of dignitaries. Others were with him, some with burns like his, some on crutches and some in wheel chairs, but all in various stages of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is the purpose of the new Intrepid Center—healing from the flames of war fallen on those in service of their country.

As I watched them on TV, I could not help but wonder how they were coping with life. Certainly everything has changed for them. Something has happened to them that they never believed. Oh, they knew the possibilities, but those things happen to someone else, not to them. But it did happen to them. Now they must face life in a much different way than they had anticipated—much different than they were prepared for.

Life does not prepare us for some of the twists it takes. Most of those twists are simple bends in the road that we later see as inconveniences. But some twists completely redefine lives as it did for these soldiers. I could not help but think about the outstanding athletes among them that no longer had legs, and the ones voted most handsome by their classmates who now look in the mirror to see a horror movie staring back. Life has to be redefined for them. The road they once traveled is no longer an open one.

But maybe there is another side to it. For sure some of them will forever stand as symbols of a fallen world. But just as surely some are chosen to follow Jesus into victory. These are the ones who will one day wear medals of valor for the spirit, strength and courage with which they faced adversity.

And let us not forget, Jesus was touched by the flames of war too. It is the reason He came. He did not want to face what was before him either. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." (*Mark 14:36*) He drank from the cup presented him. And our lives are saved.

Those chosen through the flames of war also drink from the cup presented them. And with the spirit, strength and courage we draw from them, our lives are blessed.

"You are the light of the world."

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