

# ***REFLECTIONS***

September 16, 2007

**I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

*2 Corinthians 12:9-10*

## **Model of Hope**

We rose in applause with others in the audience as Joni Eareckson Tada maneuvered her motorized wheelchair toward center stage. We stood to honor and express our appreciation for the model of hope that her life represents to so many.

Once a normal and active teenager, a split-second of poor judgment transformed an energetic and athletic body into a life of quadriplegia. Confinement to a wheelchair and dependence on others for even the simple daily chores of life was not the way Joni had planned to live. Unless we are already there, none of us can really imagine how life would be to live that way, or how such a life could be endured. Even in Joni's own story there were those moments of despair.

After the accident, she prayed for God to take her life, but when God did not answer that prayer, she changed her request saying, "Dear God, if you won't let me die, then please show me how to live." Through her broken body, her prayer was answered.

Joni Eareckson Tada dedicates her life to a ministry to the disabled. With only the use of muscles above her shoulders, she sings, she writes, and she paints. She takes her ministry to the airwaves on Christian radio stations; she travels throughout the world making talks and sending a message of hope. She does not disguise the difficulties she faces each day, but neither do her infirmities diminish her message nor dampen the joy in her smile. She boasts gladly in her weakness and Christ's strength is revealed.

Joni is quick to point out that quadriplegia is not the only form of disability. She finds that forms of disabilities are caused by insults, persecutions, and other difficulties; but she believes we all have a choice about how we live with them. We can pray for God to let us die because of them, or we can pray for God to show us how to live with them.

Helplessly from a wheelchair, Joni Eareckson Tada stands tall as a model of hope. Through her weakness Christ reveals his strength.

He will reveal his strength through our weaknesses too if we choose to let him.

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

*Richard +*

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