



REFLECTIONS

June 6, 2010

**Whatever is has already been,
and what will be has been before;
and God will call the past to account.**

Ecclesiastes 3:15

Old Books

“Before you read a new book, read an old one,” my friend frequently encouraged. So, recently I did. *Travels with Charlie* is John Steinbeck’s narrative of his journey to discover America with his faithful poodle named Charlie. He masterfully documented his journey through our nation over fifty years ago, describing the people of that time and the way they lived. He fished with them in forbidden lakes, ate with them in remote cafes, and made friends of people with far different perspectives of life.

He found warm hearts in people hidden behind evil eyes and crude ways. He found insecurity disguised as fearlessness, and he discovered loving concern from those that expressed no interest in the world at all. He found hidden treasures in the course of the ordinary and the commonplace in the footprints of the unusual.

I was struck by what he found along his journey; and I marveled at the pictures he painted through the words he wrote. He made the rain feel wet, the body shiver in the cold, and the mouth salivate from the fragrance of a fish fry. John Steinbeck was blessed with a very special gift and those of us who read his work are blessed with the insights he had into the world as it was back then. And as I re-read of his travels those fifty years ago I discover a world that is much the same today as it was when it was written. The landscape may be reshaped in places, and the faces of the people have a different look, but the people of the world back then are the same as we know them to be today.

Before you read a new book, read an old one. The Old Testament is a good place to start. In it we find the journeys of God’s chosen people, the hardships they faced, the wrongs they committed, and the punishments they endured. We find people there with warm hearts hidden behind evil eyes and crude ways; and there are fearless people who drop to their knees trembling with despair. We find hidden treasures in the course of the ordinary and the commonplace in the footprints of the unusual. And the Old Testament reveals why we need a Savior.

And as we re-read it again and again we discover a world that is much the same today as it was thousands of years ago when it was written. The landscape may be reshaped in places, and the faces of the people have a different look, but the people of the world back then are the same as we know them to be today. And we still need a Savior.

“You are the light of the world.”

Richard +

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