

REFLECTIONS

October 28, 2007

If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever.

1 Peter 4:11

Profound Lessons

My memory is hazy about most events in that year of my life, but I remember this one. I was four years old then and it was the summer of the World War II offensive that we know as D-Day. On this occasion, some of my parents' friends were home on furlough from military service. I remember them gathered in our backyard for a picnic style afternoon. I especially remember J.P.

J.P. was a sailor, and that day he was decked out in full navy uniform with the distinctive sailors' cap resting atop of his balding head. He enjoyed the company of my mom and dad and the other friends, but he also found time for me. I remember so well how he took me to the front yard armed with a ball and sawed-off broomstick. He placed the stick in my hands and positioned me in just the right way. Then he stepped back and softly tossed the ball to me cheering me to swing at it. I had never done that before. We practiced and practiced until I learned to hit the ball. I didn't want to quit.

Now there seemed to be no profound lessons from that experience. J.P.'s coaching did not lead me to become a professional ball player. The instruction he gave me did not make me smarter or make me stronger. And there was nothing extraordinary about what J.P. did either. He simply took the time to teach a young boy a little about baseball. Besides a snapshot that someone took, the event went unnoticed. But I noticed.

J.P. was one of many heroes that have brought joy to my life. But this one is a joy that lingers long after J.P. departed this world. As I relive that memory, it helps me understand that there was indeed a profound lesson that day, and it had nothing to do with baseball. The lesson was about bringing joy to a life.

Bringing joy to a life glorifies our loving God. And joy leaves lasting memories that linger long after we have departed this world.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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