



REFLECTIONS

August 9, 2009

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

Ray of Hope

She was a stranger to me in an unfamiliar lobby of a nursing home, but her smile and twinkling eyes summoned me toward her. The conversation began with the usual pleasantries that in due course revealed that she was a stroke victim. She lamented a bit that she had lost the use of her legs and that her wheelchair would replace them for the rest of her life. Her smile was not lost in her story and the twinkle in her eyes told me that she also knew matters could be so much worse.

She recalled to me the active life she had lived and how she used her hands and feet to work in her garden and in service to those around her. Her voice revealed a hint of sadness when she expressed that her life was now changed. “I seem to have no purpose in life now and I wonder what I am supposed to do.”

Through my memory danced a similar conversation with my dad as he struggled with a related issue. The answer we discussed that day is the answer I suggested to my newly found friend. “I believe God has a purpose for our lives until we take our final breath,” I said. “Perhaps when we reach a certain phase of life our purpose is simply to be someone to be cared for.”

With a big grin on her face she said, “Well, I never thought of it like that,” and I heard a note of contentment in her voice. Maybe she had found a new purpose in her life.

With that our conversation was interrupted by others that had entered the room, and we went our separate ways. I don’t know if I will ever see her again, and I did not catch her name, but it was a notable few minutes with a lady in need of attention. Perhaps my words made a difference in her life, but I know my time with her made a difference in mine. She indeed had become someone for me to care for even for such a brief moment; and I was lifted by it.

Now in reflection, I discover that in that incidental moment an opportunity had emerged. It was an opportunity to share a lesson from my own life—a lesson that offered a ray of hope to someone seeking to find new purpose in her life. And along with a ray of hope, maybe she carried away still another life purpose. It is one we all have—to share the lessons of our own lives with those around us. They may become a ray of hope.

“You are the light of the world.”

Richard +

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