

# ***REFLECTIONS***

February 3, 2008

**Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.**

*Deuteronomy 4:9-10*

## **Takeaways**

“So,” my new friend asked, “What do you think your takeaway is from this conference?” It was a question I had not yet considered so my mind raced through a laundry list of possibilities for an answer. Here I was in a place beyond my comfort zone still in wonder of why I was here at all, and now someone asked about my takeaways.

Attendance at a Christian writers’ conference was a venture into a new world for me. I have been writing and publishing devotional material through emails for several years now, but the step into the world of aspiring writers was an adventure beyond my comfort zone. And before I could digest it all, someone asked about my takeaways.

Takeaways are valuable benefits gained. Takeaways make us grow. Takeaways mean we have grown. I discovered several. Some obvious ones are the numerous new books to read, new friends to add to my list of contacts, and a weary mind from a brisk schedule. But the most important takeaways are the stories I heard and the importance of sharing our stories with others.

I heard stories of family history that traced acts of courage into foreign lands, about near death experiences, and about novels that converted lost souls to Jesus Christ. I found encouragement from those blessed with success from stories they had written, and inspiration from those whose passion for telling stories makes their mission undaunted.

We all have stories to tell, and someone out there needs to hear them. The conference was for writers, but the medium is unimportant. *The stories are!*

Our stories need to be told. It is what God has called us to do. We may write about them or speak about them, and sometimes we may even reenact them. But through whatever medium we choose, we must tell them. Stories we share are the takeaways we give to others—takeaways that will change their lives; help them grow; and shape the world. That’s why God asks us to tell them.

And without our stories—well, what might the takeaways be?

*“You are the light of the world,”*

*Richard* +

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