

# ***REFLECTIONS***

December 28, 2008

**"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways,"  
declares the Lord.**

*Isaiah 55:8*

## **What Might Have Been**

Philip stood at the station disappointed that the bus he wanted to take had no room for him. Neither did the one the next day—or the next. He so wanted to start his annual trip to Mexico and resume his role as Santa Claus to needy children there—especially the little boy with the sad eyes. But the buses were full. Philip had to wait.

So while he waited his turn, he continued his daily routines. Breakfast at the usual place, a brief visit with an employee of a familiar store, and a stop by the post office in search of a message from anyone who cared who he was—such was the daily ritual. The post office box was opened with little expectation, although there was always an element of anticipation, the thrill that a surprise might be waiting. This time there was.

It was a letter from a faraway place, a return address that was not familiar, but the name of the sender was. Philip tore into the envelope, being careful only to preserve the return address. The note read, “Dear Philip, I hope this letter finds you, and that you are well...” A tear came to his eye as he read the words from a lost love. Someone *did* care.

“Ah, but for the bus reservation,” he thought. “If all had gone as planned, I would not have seen this lovely note for weeks. I would have continued to feel alone, unwanted. What a blessing it was that the buses were full. God is good.”

Philip was struck by what might have been. If things had gone as planned he would have been in Mexico when the letter arrived. Perhaps he would have seen the little boy with the sad eyes sooner; but for sure, he would not have known that *he* mattered to someone in his past. Indeed he might *never* have known, for who knows if he would ever return from Mexico to find the letter at all.

Our ways are not God’s ways. His timing is perfect. Ours is fraught with poor judgment, limited foresight, and selfish desires. A business deal closes later than planned while the market plunges to new lows that would have brought financial loss. Or a trip is delayed, but while we wait the voices of a beautiful choir are heard; we encounter a long lost friend, or make a new one, or an uplifting letter arrives.

The New Year waits with renewed hopes and rekindled dreams. But with it come the regrets of dreams unmet and the joys of surprises unplanned—

Each a blessing from God.

*“You are the light of the world,”*

*Richard* +

[www.reflectingthesavior.org](http://www.reflectingthesavior.org)

Permission is hereby granted for reproduction and redistribution of this edition of *Reflections* provided all applicable copyright laws are properly observed.

Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. Richard may be reached at [richard@reflectingthesavior.org](mailto:richard@reflectingthesavior.org).