



REFLECTIONS

September 23, 2012

I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

John 12:46

Quiet Moments

Those quiet moments, when the mind is free, distractions erased, and only God can be heard, come far too seldom. Perhaps there is always opportunity for them, but in the rush of daily activities we don't allow them to be. But one such moment came while descending in silence down a hillside that overlooked the deep blue waters of a lake best known as the Sea of Galilee. Blankets of tall grasses waved around us like wheat blowing in a Kansas field; and only the crunch of feet on the rocky path we followed disturbed the quiet air. The scene in all its beauty and peace was vibrant and alive.

Sitting on the west shore beyond the wind chopped water we could see Tiberius, a city established by Herod Antipas and named for Tiberius Caesar. Across the lake toward the east sat Decapolis, the land Jesus referred to as "the other side." It was the place where a tormented man was freed from his demons, and a herd of pigs, indwelt by them, ran wildly into the abyss.

On the waters below us, our imagination captured Jesus walking across the white-capped waters, calming the storms, reprimanding doubts and explaining how powerful faith can be. And our minds fancied a picture of Jesus standing on shore calling Peter, Andrew, James and John from their fishing boats to, "*Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.*"

The dazzling imagery continued to showcase events along that hillside until we reached the base of it. Then we turned to gaze up at the path we had descended. Jesus had once walked down that hillside. He had preached from there. It was in such a place that He fed the thousands with only five barley loaves and two small fish. It was in such a place where a mesmerized crowd heard him explain the beatitudes and teach lessons about judging others, the futility of worry, giving humbly to the poor, and how to pray.

The day had begun as an adventure to visit a time and place that once was; but in the quiet moments along the way the past came to life as the vivid present. Above the sounds of the water splashing on the shore behind, we heard Jesus instructing his disciples to cast their nets on the other side of the boat, and we smelled breakfast cooking his one last meal with them. And in the quiet moments of our minds, we stood among the crowd looking up the hillside to see his eyes looking squarely into ours and say,

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden...let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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