



REFLECTIONS

July 28, 2013

Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

1 Corinthians 10:24

The Toolbox

If we pay close attention, we can find lessons from God almost anywhere, even from the repair of a refrigerator door. Time and use loosened the handle of ours recently and the pieces that fastened it were hidden by a tiny hole under the handle. The hole allowed a diminutive hexagon shaped tool to connect with a small screw that fastened the handle to the door. And the toolbox contained just the one that was needed

The toolbox started with the traditional hammers, screwdrivers, and wrenches, but over the years, the contents of the toolbox changed. Other implements with special and less common uses were added as needs arose and as innovations and technology introduced new ones. One of the items added to the toolbox was an Allen wrench—just the right one needed to tighten the refrigerator door handle.

One would not often think much about a toolbox. It is a container for tools that keeps them together in one place, but otherwise its function is quite limited. Its contents change over time as new tools are added while others become worn out, removed, or lost. The tools contained in it serve different functions, none of them sharing much common ability with the others. But they do share a few common things. They are all placed in the toolbox by a human hand; none of the tools function without help from the hand that placed them there; and none of the work they perform is for their own good.

Thoughts of a commonplace toolbox, its purpose, and contents became a metaphor. Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians described a "toolbox" of sorts when he explained the workings of the Church and its members. *One body, many parts*, he described, but he didn't stop there. Each member is blessed with spiritual gifts and Paul identified some that were in the "toolbox" in his day. Over the years some of those gifts have been removed or lost while others have been added to meet the Spirit's changing needs. After all, the gifts are instilled in the "toolbox" by the Holy Spirit; and they are to be used for the good of others, not for their own good.

So back to the lesson from the refrigerator door. The Allen wrench saved the day. It had an ability no other tool possessed. If tools were animate, the Allen wrench may have been hailed in a celebration parade down Main Street. But God doesn't use tools that way. *The first shall be last and the last shall be first*, He tells us. And *that it is by grace [we] have been saved—not by works, so that no one can boast*. So here is the lesson.

Like the use of our spiritual gifts, it was not the special tool that restored the refrigerator door handle to good working order.

The good was from the hands that used it.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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.