



REFLECTIONS

August 18, 2013

**"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good,
or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad,
for a tree is recognized by its fruit."**

Matthew 12:33

Succession Plan

David gazed at his beautiful wife while memories of his life raced through his head. Remembering God's many blessings throughout the years warmed his heart. Love for God brought him his greatest joy, yet too often the depths of sin consumed his being. Bathsheba came into his life that way; but God had blessed him anyway. And now as David pondered the end of his days, one question consumed his mind, "Who shall take my place?"

The question is a common one. Even when not expressed aloud, it is nonetheless present as time gathers in people's lives. Who shall be the one to continue the message, to carry on the traditions, and to bear the mark one has made in this world? Questions of succession face almost everyone whether royalty, heads of state, organizational leadership, or simply a family role. There are systems to assure succession. They are a part of God's design.

Succession is instilled in life. *"Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.'"* (Genesis 1:11) Everything has a season the poet wrote, and on reflection, there is one reason for the lives we have been called to live—succession. Like the flowers in the ground, the birds in the air, and the fish of the sea, we live in this world for but a short time. We make our marks on it, and we plant seeds that will one day sprout, grow, and flourish on their own to carry on the position, the mission, the role, or message that we pass along.

Life has a succession plan like a great relay. *Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth.* (Gen 1:28) Or "Pass It On," the songwriter encouraged. Isn't that the essence of it all, life born, flourishing, planting, nurturing new fruit that will take the baton and plant the seeds that continue the race? And the baton is more than physical life. The message of Christ is the purpose of it all.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20) Flowers blooming today will become dust tomorrow. But the blooms from those that follow will decorate the world with all the beauty of those before them. And one day our lives will leave a legacy too. And the question is not, "Who will take my place?" The question is "What is the legacy that will carry on?"

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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