



REFLECTIONS

June 22, 2014

**Not to us, O Lord, not to us
but to your name be the glory,**

Psalm 115:1

Let's Pretend

Let's Pretend—it was a name for child's play I remember. For years, we probably played it more than anything else. We didn't always call it that. We usually would begin with the suggestion, "Let's play like we are... (*you fill in the blank.*)" If a girl was included, she would always want to be some kind of princess, but the boys, we played heroes. We were the champions against evil just like we saw in the movies. Sometimes we were war heroes, sometimes Superman, sometimes the white hat cowboys of the old west. But no matter the setting, we were Academy Award winners at *Let's Pretend*.

As I recall my memories of those days, it occurs to me that not much has really changed since then. We don't call the activity by name anymore, but I've come to realize that *Let's Pretend* is an adult game too. The roles we play and the successes we reveal are not so much about the dreams we have as they are circumstances we want to conceal. We pretend to be something we aren't or to have something we don't.

Oh, the motives may be different. Back then the girls daydreamed of majesty, and the boys dreamed to be the superman that saved the world from disaster or the princess from the villain. As children we tried to pretend we were something everyone knew we were not. Now as adults, we pretend to be something we aren't to hide something that might threaten our image. Either way, it's a game. As children we called it *Let's Pretend*. As adults, its better name is "pride."

Possessions, position, and power infiltrate our lives either through ambition or truth. To those around us, they may come to define who we are. Wealth may characterize success. Status identifies with elite associations or recognition, and power exemplifies authority. Then, should any one of them diminish or slip away, we easily resort to the Academy Award performances of *Let's Pretend*.

Changing circumstances often bring pressures to modify lifestyle, to cut back, or to reduce public visibility. That is when our pride steps in to deceive those around us. Concealing what might be deemed as failure becomes the objective. Stature in the eyes of others needs protection. What will they think? How will they react? Will we lose status in their eyes? Those are the questions of pride.

As children, *Let's Pretend* gave us a way to play out our dreams. As grown-ups, it is a game to hide nightmarish truths. Pride is the focus on one's self. But our lives should focus attention away from self.

The focus is to glorify God.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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