



REFLECTIONS

September 14, 2014

Jesus wept.

John 11:35

Jesus Wept

Tears simply burst from my eyes and anguish from my voice that day. At eighteen I was supposed to be strong, a man not only in control but conquering my emotions. I wasn't supposed to expose my feelings but sorrow could not be concealed. Oh, the pain I felt. Uncontrolled emotions led to so many memories, regrets, concerns, and fears.

Since that day there have been many other grief-stricken times when no consoling acts could comfort my grief; but that day I became aware of one of life's realities. The sight of my grandfather's lifeless body stirred an awareness that had not concerned me before. On the day we honored his life, I looked around to find others grieving too. That revelation may have been the most heart wrenching of all for I found myself grieving also for them. On reflection I became aware that my feelings were shared by many others and that the emotions we all had were grounded in compassion and love.

Today as I recall the passions of that day and the numerous others subsequent, I think about Jesus when he stood at the tomb of his good friend, Lazarus. No other Bible passage captures the humanity of Jesus more than *Jesus wept*. He was grief stricken, yet in his deity and his relationship with his Father, did he not know the wonder and piece found in life beyond this world? Yet Jesus wept. Was his grief because of the pain he found in the hearts of Martha and Mary? He already knew the joy they would feel when their brother would awaken only a few moments later. Still Jesus wept. Did he not know that death would be conquered? Or did he weep because of the hopelessness he saw in those around him?

The answers to these questions we can only suppose, but beneath grief rests compassion and love. So, I wonder if Jesus was grieving for those standing with him at Lazarus' tomb just as I found myself grieving for others who loved my grandfather. Surely his humanity gave him a sense of personal loss enough to make him weep. Jesus felt love in the air as he stood with Martha and Mary. He felt the anguish of death and its seeming finality to those who surrounded him. So Jesus wept. He wept because he cared. And he chose to die because he loved.

Jesus conquered death when he rose from it. Now there is no longer reason for us to anguish.

"Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Corinthians 15:55, 57)

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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