



REFLECTIONS

November 2, 2014

And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:16

Pause in Reflection

Events of life often carry with them times to pause in reflection. Such times include celebrations of life like birthdays and funerals, marked holidays like Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving, and unplanned events such as a serious illness or a painful accident. Many times they are cause to mourn the loss of what once was or what might have been. But for me at least, they also bring times to reflect on God's blessings. For me there are too many to count.

The years have certainly been filled with embarrassments, disappointments, and losses together with hosts of indescribable emotional occasions for lamenting the pains that life requires us all to endure. Those times can easily influence the perspective of God and the world he created. "Why?" we often ask when we can't envision God's plan. Too easily the blessings surrounding us are lost in the emotions of the moment. And too often we allow those moments to linger and to snuff out the sense of God's many blessings.

Behind the veil of an imperfect world, God is always present. The imperfections are not of his making. They are ours. Yet even as we endure the consequences of all the wrongdoings that date back to the Garden of Eden, he has never withheld his love for us.

Today as I reflect on his love for me, I begin with where I am in this walk through life and I track back through the path that brought me here. I reflect back on my place of birth, who my parents were, the lessons they taught through word and deed. I trace through the choices they made for me and then to the choices I made for myself. There are both benefits and consequences from them all, but how blessed I am from them.

I reflect on the faithful companions who have shared in my journey—the classmates that shared my youth, the fun we had together, the adventures we shared in the exploration of life before us, and the other friends who joined the journey along the way.

God has blessed me with successes not of my making and joys never imagined. Even tough times have served as blessings in their own way. But as Paul told us, "*we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.*" (Romans 8:28)

Then, standing alongside God's blessing through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ, I find the blessing of my loving wife, the life we have shared together, and the beautiful family that has grown from our love. What a blessing from a loving God!

In the Scriptures, Mark tells of a time when Jesus *took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.* Today as I pause in reflection during one of those celebrations of life, it is clear to me that I am one of those children.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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