



REFLECTIONS

April 17, 2016

**I wait for the LORD , my soul waits,
and in his word I put my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.**

Psalm 130:5-6

Transitions

That day is branded into the fabric of my mind. Sixty years after my grandfather began what would become our family's business, we closed on the sale of it. Memories reached into the past when I walked into my grandfather's former office, lifted his picture from the wall, placed it under my arm and walked out for the final time. Sadness fell over me as I watched my grandmother, my dad, and my uncle walk out the door of the business for the final time. An era had ended and I wonder now, after it is too late to ask, how my dad felt as he entered into the emotional and psychological state of transition.

Transitions happen in every life. Whether induced by births or deaths, the youngest child leaving home, or the sale of a family business, transitions are part of life. They mark the end of an era followed by adventures unfolding to define a new one. In between falls the period called transition—the emotionally packed time between something's end and the beginning of something else. The emotional piece distinguishes transition from simple situational change.

William Bridges, author of *Transitions, Making Sense of Life's Changes*, explains the phenomenon quite well and I draw many of my thoughts expressed here from his. So, think about retirement after a life-defining career. One day you are making the world go around in your job, and the next day emptiness screams into your soul. Or think of the superstar athlete riding the high wave of a major championship one year only to face the disappointing fall when handing the trophy to someone else a short year later.

Transition. It poses the question, "What now?" It's a time of waiting after something has ended. It's a time for listening and discerning what's next. That's what Moses did before God called him to lead the Israelites into the promised land. And that's what Paul did after his encounter with the risen Christ along the Damascus road.

Now looking back, I can see that my dad did that too. He faced a series of transitions after the business sold, all of them diminishing his capacity. All of them related to the relentless progression of time. But even as he grew older, weaker, and more dependent, he was always still waiting for whatever tomorrow might bring. And the strength of his spirit revealed the depth of his faith. God had a purpose for each stage of his life.

And God led him through a transition into each and every one of them.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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