



REFLECTIONS

January 8, 2017

**Pleasant words are a honeycomb,
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.**

Proverbs 16:24

Home on the Range

Some of us are still around with memories of the Saturday westerns with singing cowboys, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers and their sidekicks Pat Buttram and Gabby Hayes. And we also remember the songs of the Sons of the Pioneers in those movies. Many times, I would go home singing the songs and playing the parts of the cowboy heroes who conquered the bad guys and won the affections of the girl.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Having grown up in ranching country, I easily relate to the open range with horseback cowboys herding cattle for branding or shipment to market. Though I never found comfort astride a horse, the open range still offers a touch of home to my senses just as the song suggests. And perhaps even more is a powerful reminder therein, “Where seldom is heard a discouraging word.”

Cowboy life is rugged, fraught with danger, and an unrelenting battle with perils of wildlife and nature. Encouragement is treasured if not necessary for survival. But isn't that also true in our journeys through life. We're all in of need it. We all should offer it.

How easily we find fault in those around us, often branding people by their deficiencies as if we have none of our own. Even good qualities of those we love become overlooked when we give too much attention to their faults. *Reckless words pierce like a sword*, says Proverbs 12:18, *but the tongue of the wise brings healing*.

It seems to me we make a greater difference in people's lives with encouraging words than with disapproving ones. As someone so accurately described, “People will not remember you so much by what you did for them, as by how you made them feel.”

Encouraged is a pretty good feeling to leave with someone. Wonder if that should be one of this year's resolutions?

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org.