



REFLECTIONS

August 20, 2017

**A time to keep,
And a time to throw away**

Ecclesiastes 3:6

Family Heirloom

The year I received the gift escapes me, but somewhere in the mid 60's comes to mind. I received it unexpectedly and for no identifiable reason. Not a birthday, an anniversary, or a traditional holiday celebration. Family heirlooms, such as this one, are usually passed along further into one's life than my dad was then, but he must have felt the time had come for him to pass my grandfather's watch to me. He seemed to have felt he had kept it long enough, and I was chosen to receive it because, like my dad, I shared my grandfather's given name.

There seems to be a pattern in life of passing along family treasures from generation to generation. There's a time to keep them as a reminder of cherished memories, but later, there's a time when those treasures are passed along as reminders of family heritage.

Family is one of God's many blessings to us. I can't help but wonder if family isn't the image of God in which we were created. Isn't Father, Son, and Holy Spirit the family of God? And might that not be the reason family becomes so very important to us? Family is where we have come from. And family is the most significant legacy most of us will leave in this world.

Recently, the need for a new watch band called my attention to my grandfather's watch, but my focus heightened when the sales clerk complimented its beauty. Many others have complimented it over the 50 plus years I have had it, still its looks are only part of the reason I wear it almost every day. I wear it for its function of course, but when I put it on each morning and when I take it off each night, I remember my grandfather.

To others, he may have seemed a bit gruff, and I suppose he was at times. But his watch reminds me of his commitment to his family, and his support of his church. It reminds me of the prayers he led at every meal and the stories I heard about him reading the Bible to his children at meal time. It reminds me of what an elderly gentleman once said to me while visiting his wife's grave site nearby. "I loved that man." So did I.

Those are the memories the watch recall to me and the family heritage I hope will continue into the generations to come. But it isn't watches, rings, or old clocks that matter. The family heritage is the love they represent, and that is the legacy to pass along.

Family heirlooms may connect us to our roots. They may serve as reminders of who we are. But most of all, they should remind us of God's family and the love they have for us, God's children. Love is a family heirloom we can keep all our lives.

Love is the family heirloom we should leave when our days on earth are done.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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