



REFLECTIONS

June 3, 2018

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

John 15:12-13

My Hero

Life spared me the horror of watching men struggle and die on the battlefields of wars fought during my journey through this world. I've only read the books and seen the movies about them and the heroes who lived through those battles and the heroes who died to save those around them.

More than one fallen hero chose in an instant to throw his body on an incoming enemy grenade to save the lives of their buddies fighting beside him. Surely those heroes are remembered for their valor and their sacrifice. But I pause now to wonder about those whose lives were saved. Their lives were spared. They were also shaped by the action someone took to save them.

Gratitude, grateful, sorrowful, regretful, guilt, shame are words that come to mind that might describe how those survivors felt in remembrance the one who save them. Because of the sacrifice of one, their lives were spared. "Why me?" they may ask.

But what if the hero had not fallen on the grenade? What if he had chosen to save himself instead? His friends would have died, and he would have been left behind—alone. Alone with an inner pain that would not leave, or if it did leave, in its place would be a cold, dark hole where love should have dwelled.

In place of his death would be the pictures of his buddies, ever present, hanging heavy with words like regret, guilt, bitterness, emptiness, sorrowful, shame. And there's one more word. Disobedient. "*Love each other as I have loved you,*" Jesus told us.

Life spared me the horror of watching men struggle and die on the battlefields of wars fought during my journey through this world. But life has not spared me from the battles waged for my soul. It's a battle I'm destined to lose but for my Hero who stands beside me. He didn't make a spontaneous decision to fall on a grenade to save me. Rather, my Hero deliberately chose to suffer long and to die that I may live. There is one word to describe it. Blessed! And there are words to describe my Hero too: *he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!* (Philippians 2:8)

And why me? *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.* (John 3:16-17)

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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