



REFLECTIONS

June 17, 2018

**Blessed is the man [who delights] in the law of the Lord...
He is like a tree planted by streams of water,**

Psalm 1:1, 2-3

Youthful Days

A gentle breeze beneath a wispy cloud layer cooled the air where three boyhood friends stood together on the first tee. Rain the night before did nothing to dampen the competitive spirits, athletic challenges, and youthful mischief that bonded their lives. Time sent them in separate directions and different pursuits after their school years together, but on occasion they joined to relive some of their youthful days.

The golf course stirred their competitive blood just as hotly as ever keeping the bond of friendship too strong to ever break. For them, it set the stage for the return of old friends and classmates to the small, dusty farming community that once had been home.

There's a three-year rhythm for former graduates to gather and remember their beginnings, and to celebrate their lives beyond them. Sometimes old songs come to mind when reflecting on those former days. *Dear Hearts and Gentle People* is one that described the place and the souls of the people I remember there. I found it still to be so.

Usually those returns home rekindle the mindfulness of blessings carried from there. Maybe that's what helped me remember Bing Crosby crooning the words to *Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep* when I was growing up.

The lives of those old friends gathered to remember and celebrate cast a warmth on life there and beyond there. Every one of those people, past and present, occupy a tender spot in my heart, a spot that holds within it the many blessings of my life. Reflections on them help me realize I need to count those blessings more often.

The parade of todays marching toward us like one battleground after another easily distracts us from the presence of God in our lives. The return home provided a break from that daily battleground. The people from that place and time instilled the values that shaped my life and set the course for it. They are still God's instruments for blessing my life *like a tree planted by streams of water*.

Blessings. Can we count them enough? We feel blessed when the wonder of a newborn blooms into our lives like a fragrant rose. When a needed rain comes from nowhere, or when a loving arm drapes around slumped shoulders, blessings fill our being. At least for me, and I think for those who shared the days back home together, we feel blessed by the youthful days like those three boyhood friends relived in a round of golf. Aging souls now filled the shoes reliving the youthful days imbedded in their memories, but their spirit remains as vibrantly alive as ever.

Still blessed—and counting.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org.

Permission is hereby granted for reproduction and redistribution of this edition of *Reflections* provided all applicable copyright laws are properly observed.

Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. Richard may be reached at richard@reflectingthesavior.org.