



REFLECTIONS

October 28, 2018

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

Something to Pray For

Solemn silence fell on the room. Stunned by unfathomable pain, the emotional kind, nothing else but silence became possible. Breath left the room. Life stood still. All that had been before ended there. Whatever came next began a new chapter if not a new story.

One might ascribe the scene just described to Job when his troubles struck; but almost everyone relates to a time like it—or will. Life delivers those defining moments when all that has ever been no longer is. Such a thought lingered among other fleeting ones that dashed confusingly through my mind on an otherwise blissful morning. Thoughts were good ones; deep I mean, but not especially pleasant. But in my usual fashion, they came in random order, no apparent continuity between them. And by fleeting, I mean none of those thoughts lasted long enough to ponder before another one replaced it.

Readings that morning focused on wishes and pain. Those topics seemed as disconnected as my thoughts were random. Who wishes for pain except for it to subside? But my reading led in a different direction. Pain is inevitable in this life. We have endured it; we likely are experiencing some form of it now; and we have more yet to face along the path of life. All we can really do about pain is to choose how we will try to deal with it when it comes along.

One choice is to live on as its victim, trying to draw sympathy claiming, “poor me,” and allowing life to be defined by punishment that nothing good will ever come from. Or there is another way. Let pain be a blessing.

Pain can entomb life to the point that there is no life except for the pain of it. Pain may be ours to suffer, but *we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.* (Romans 8:28) God has a plan for our suffering not yet revealed in us. Someday we will discover our pain has been a blessing.

Jesus feared pain so much that blood dripped from his brow. But it’s not too hard to understand that you and I have been blessed by his death and resurrection. God chose Job to endure profound pain as a test of faith—not for God to see, rather for him to discover through his own pain. And as for our pain being a blessing, maybe we won’t *feel* personally blessed by it either; but like Job, we are blessed to have been chosen that with our scars God equips us to become blessings in this world. Now that blessing would be something to wish for.

Better yet, it’s something to pray for.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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