



# *REFLECTIONS*

November 4, 2018

**He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is  
gracious  
will have the king for his friend.**

*Proverbs 22:11*

## **Pretty Good Memory to Leave**

“Friends are people you make part of your life just because you feel like it.” I think the author of these words has it right. Frederick Buechner explains the container of friendship and what lies within it. He writes that friends are your friends “for no particular reason.” Circumstances may draw people together, but friendship is a choice.

Whatever the introduction, common interest, shared situations, work relationships, or whatever else, they are replaced by something deeper, special, and unexplainable when friendship is chosen. Sometimes I think I choose a friend because they chose me. That’s likely how I chose Eddie Alvarado as a friend.

He was almost two decades younger with no shared background, education, or other interests with me that I know of. Neither do I believe our friendship was unique in the setting of it. In the performance of his duties as locker-room attendant, there were hundreds of club members for him to choose as friends the way he chose me. And I’m sure he did.

In thinking about choosing friends “for no particular reason,” they aren’t chosen for what they do, their family background, religious beliefs or the like. Friendship is about none of those. Those matters are not important to the relationship even if you do talk about them. As Buechner says, “The usual distinctions of older-younger, richer-poorer, smarter-dumber, male-female even, cease to matter. You meet with a clean slate every time, and you meet on equal terms.” That pretty much describes my friendship with Eddie, a clean slate every time and on equal terms.

Eddie’s life recently journeyed to another place where his smile has no doubt warmed the hearts of those who preceded him there as it always warmed mine. So maybe I chose to call him friend for no particular reason as Buechner suggested; but likely his servant’s heart and gracious demeanor had something to do with it. Without pretense, frills or lofty ambition, Eddie lived a simple life, taking matters as they came along but with a special interest in and heart for the people he served voiced through a memorable smile of a friend.

Now as the proverb says, Eddie has the King for his friend. He spent his life practicing to serve one, not by serving kings, but by treated everyone to feel as if there were.

Now, that’s a pretty good memory to leave.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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