



REFLECTIONS

January 27, 2019

For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Romans 14:7-8

Choosing Life

Surgery, the major kind, is nothing foreign to Charlie. A few years ago, a kidney transplant extended his life and returned him to his station as a beloved server at a well-known country club. More than fifty years on the job there has now taken a toll on Charlie's octogenarian body. Surgery is the only relief for his incessant back pain. But his surgeon postponed the scheduled procedure pending further tests on the strength of his heart.

What might have been met with disappointment Charlie received with great appreciation. "I'm glad," he said with a bounce in his voice. "I don't want my doc to have no trouble when he gets in there," he explained. "Let's check everything out first."

So, Charlie suffers with a tingling leg and painfilled nights for at least one more week before the doctor might be willing to operate. Now one more week for the doctors to ensure the surgical risk is low enough sounds okay to Charlie. He's choosing life.

Now isn't it an amazing gift from God to have wired us with a strong will to live? Our earthly being is our most cherished possession. "*Love your neighbor as yourself,*" Jesus reminded. (Mark 12:31) And, "*Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*" (John 15:13) These teachings are measured by the high value we place on our own lives.

Still, one might recall that Jesus also cautioned, "*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life,*" (Matthew 6:25) But these words were in the context of worry and the provisions for life, i.e. food, clothing, shelter, etc., not for life itself.

For life itself, Jesus comforted Martha at Lazarus' tomb, "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?*" (John 11:25-26)

Well I believe this; and I think Charlie does too. He chose life with his kidney transplant. And he is choosing life now. Either way, I think he knows this: *For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.*

For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. (Romans 14:9)

Charlie is choosing life. And of this I am sure, his life is in good hands.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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