



REFLECTIONS

January 13, 2019

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

Deuteronomy 4:9

God's Calling

A recent *Reflections* looked back 15 years to the very first one recalling the subject of traditions. About them we said, “These annual reenactments are expressions that reach back and connect us with memories we hold dear. Traditions vary from family to family and from household to household; but they are all founded in one common theme—love.” Perhaps the key element in the most meaningful of traditions went unnoticed. That element is family.

Traditions are usually most meaningful and passion-filled when they represent family legacy. The image of God mentioned in the creation of mankind, I suggest, is a family unit—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:26 references the plurality of God's image, “*Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...*” reemphasized in Genesis 9:6 “*...for in the image of God / has God made man.*” But whether or not the concept of God's image is shared, for me the importance of family has never been more strongly felt than on Christmas Day just past.

All our family descendants gathered at our home that day—what God joined together, Janice and me, with the fruit of our life together. Two children, their spouses, our children's children plus four from the fourth generation assembled in our backyard for a family photo before the onset of the other Christmas traditions. Joy filled our hearts. If my life had ended that day, all would have been well with my soul.

Warm smiles beamed across all the family faces, but the loving hearts beneath those smiles made them special. From the oldest to the youngest, (scarcely one month old), love radiated from their hearts. Now that would be a blessing to anyone, but they are a special blessing to me—all of them, the loving wife God chose for me to share my life, my two sons and the wives chosen for them, my children's children, and now four in the fourth generation. There in that family photo is my life; and for Janice and me together, our lives. And God's blessing is showered all over it.

The photo of two people nestled among the fruits of their lives captures only a moment in time. And we pause now to look back with gratitude to our loving Lord; but we also fix our eyes on the road still to travel. Troubles surely await us along the way, but amidst them, there are stories yet to tell and lessons still to teach before reaching the joy promised at journey's end.

It's God's calling to us in this world until He calls us Home.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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