



# REFLECTIONS

September 20, 2020, Refreshed from the Archives of January 16, 2005

**In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.**

*Matthew 5:16*

## A Shining Light

He didn't know how he was going to touch my life that day, but I remember it as yesterday. His name was Richard, the same as mine, and he told me of spending the day with his dying grandmother. "We told stories to each other, we laughed, we cried, and we hugged each other," he said to me. He must have seen my surprise at the openness they had with each other as they faced a difficult time because he passionately continued, "You need to tell people how you feel about them while they're *alive!* Too often you see someone in the cemetery talking to the ground and it's too late then." Then in little more than a whisper, "You need to tell them how you feel while they are *alive.*" And he held on to his last word as only a Mississippi man could, and his passion rings in my ears today.

Since that day, I have told this story to others; but more importantly, I took his encouragement to heart. Inspired by Richard's story I remembered to tell my dad that I loved him every time we talked. When he died, even with the suddenness of it, Daddy knew of my love for him, and I knew how he loved me back. Our relationship was complete; I felt closure and peace. Times with Mom filled with the same warmth and fullness as she lived out her final days. Still I miss my parents dearly, but with no regrets for anything left unsaid.

Richard was a shining light to me that day, and I praise God that from of his example I was better able to say goodbye to those so very dear. Yet, Richard had no idea how he was touching my life then.

He *certainly* didn't know how he might also be touching yours.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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