

Memories

We all have memories from the time we were very young until the time we are considered elderly, then we forget what day it is and ponder whether we should bother to get dressed. I have many memories, some are sad, but a lot are happy. Even in those times that were chaotic and bitter there were also those times when kindness and love prevailed. I prefer to remember the happy times but sometimes the sad and unhappy times were the times that most shaped me. What brought this to my mind this week was when looking through a drawer where I thought I might have stored some new cards. Instead of the new cards I happened upon the letters written to me almost 10 years ago when I went on my Emmaus Walk. Those notes were filled with stories of my impact on other people's lives, what I meant to them and what I did for them. I always felt that what they did for me was so much more special than what I did for them. Even at that time these were distant memories lost in day-to-day living. It was such a joy to read those letters once again. Two of them were from young children who called me "The chocolate lady." I loved those two children; they were such a delight. We learn in life that we will have bad days and days that bless our souls. We will lose those we love, some of those people who wrote letters or sent me cards have left my life and that brings me sorrow but then I think of the joy they brought to my life. One was a nurse who I had worked with in a hospital and then at the Red Cross. Our friendship spanned over 50 years. She was a baseball buddy, there were 4 of us and we always went to opening day, sometimes sitting with blankets and heavy coats as it snowed, and always games during the season when we would all take the same day off and go to a game. We all loved the game and going to the stadium starting with Tiger Stadium and then Comerica Park. We never failed to enjoy each other's company and win or lose enjoy the games. When our children were small, we took them to Hudson's in Detroit to see Santa Claus. I wish I had told her how much I treasured her before she passed away. There are things we need to say today and not wait until the timing is perfect. There are so many memories in my life that bring me joy, I hope I am always able to focus on those and the God filled moments they brought into my life.

"Come thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above. Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it. Mount of thy redeeming love."

From the Wesley Study Bible, in Joshua 4:1-10 we find the story of the Israelites carrying the Ark of the Covenant over the River Jordan. Joshua told them to pick up 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel and to lay them down. Joshua is telling them to remember this act, this time, this day and to tell it to their children and their children to their children. It is a lesson in remembering "God's grace in our lives, and when we remember we can summon the courage to step out in faith and take on tasks and challenges that may threaten our identity and our peace. Beyond tangible reminders, we ourselves are living stones whose builder and maker is the eternal God." Please take time to read this passage.

Lord, there is so much turmoil and sorrow in our world with wars and destruction, brutal murders and hate. We ask Lord for your redemption, for peace for those at war, with reminders that we are all your children. May we remember those times when you have touched our lives with joy, and may that joy be brought to mind when we feel lost and alone. Be with those who are sick and those filled with sorrow, may they feel your comfort. Be with Pastor Don and Laura and their family, may Elise know healing in her body and a return to health, and may her family be comforted with your strength. Be with our church, may we be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Be with our country Lord, may we find a way to peace within ourselves and all our people. May we remember that we are, "One nation under God." In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

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