

RANSOM NOTES

"Maybe Today" Hope - Dream - Inspire

Homecoming Hugs - Love - Babysitters

This writer had the privilege of recently driving to Joplin, Missouri to attend the Mid-Winter Preaching Convention held at Ozark Christian College. The fall of 1953, my mother had dropped off her one-and-only daughter at this college to begin her studies. The car was unloaded, a dorm room somewhat ready to welcome a new dweller, and final hugs and a kiss shared with the dearest human ever in my life. I was now on my own. Well, yes, there were people everywhere but still strangers. A moment of tears and a bit of fear crammed itself into my heart. College life was about to begin.

I must confess that for a few evenings as I crawled into my bed, I missed my family. Even though my brother and I had a few moments of conflict, I wanted to share soup and a sandwich with him. What were Dad and Mother doing besides paying my entrance fees to a new world? When, if ever, would I see the rest of the Ransom family again? Frankly, I was lonely for HOME.

Today, as I share these emotional thoughts, I received an email from a friend living in Joplin. February weather was particularly yucky, as about ten to eleven inches of cold, white fluffy brought messy streets and chilled fingers as it fell from the heavens. A highlight, however, of the four-hundred-mile drive to hear God's Word preached was anticipating sharing special moments with two longtime friends.

Marj was my roommate that first year in Joplin. We continued to experience a deep friendship even while she journeyed with her husband to the Philippines to teach in a Christian college. She and Sid returned to Joplin later in life. Today, almost like a homecoming, sharing breakfast, hugs, and memories from seventy years ago, provided some special moments. I even had the opportunity the third day to grab a broom and help clean away some of the ten-to-eleven inches of snow covering her steps and driveway. This chilly job done enabled us to drive slowly to the college and relish the words of love and grace bestowed upon God's children from dedicated leaders from various churches. I had come home to where I had grown from teenager to a young adult. While receiving teaching about our future heavenly home being prepared by God, I discovered another family with whom one could rejoice and shed tears together, just like my biological family.

The second individual, Sergio, I have known many fewer years but the same kind of friendship, just like flowers, grow rich and beautiful in a very short time. We have shared some life experiences that bond our hearts together in a special way. In fact, he might fill the hole in my heart for my little brother who has already left this world and gone for a special homecoming with the Lord. He shared in an email a special potential homecoming that is so exciting. His son, Josiah, sent his dad a text saying that he and his family were considering moving a bit further out of town and then kind of hinted that perhaps his dad might think about letting them build on some land Sergio owned.

Well, to put it mildly, the father was quietly leaping for joy that his son might want to return to live nearer to his mom and dad. His response to me was, "My dad heart leapt. Of course I responded in the positive." I could not help but think of the story in Luke 15:11-32 when the Father ran to meet his son returning from afar to be a part of the family again. No, my friend's son was not a prodigal boy, but the joy of family together again was similar. I can just imagine the day when the home is built and the family is driving in with a load of furniture. My friend will dash out to hug, grab a small child perhaps, and even help unload a trunk of toys or boxes of sheets and blankets, uniting the family as they share love, tears, and a future babysitter. That will be an exciting homecoming.

Then, how can I not remind each of us how there is another Father eagerly waiting to greet us and welcome us back to a new heavenly home where His adopted children will rejoice. Paul mentions this adoption in Ephesians 1:5. *"He (God) predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will ..."* Again in Romans 8:15-16, *"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."*

I, for one, am anxious for that *Homecoming*.

How about you, Dear Reader?

Get your spiritual luggage prepared for Move-In Day.