

The Eagle's Nest

By Philip J. Lawson, J.D.

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A Few Thoughts for the New Year

Gratitude for the Blessing to be Born in America

In selecting a topic for this issue of The Liaison, I started thinking about the “goings on” internationally – the struggle between terrorism and the free world; the struggle between the Democrats and the Republicans, and the election of a new president of the most powerful nation in the world.



I considered several different topics, but was not satisfied that any were appropriate with the concerns I had in mind.

For some time now, I have entertained the thought that the issues I should discuss should reflect in some way the simplicity of a number of ideas I have filed away in my “treasure drawer.” Fortunately, both my mother and father had the habit of collecting and writing about topics that were meaningful with their values and beliefs.

At the time of my mother’s untimely death last year at the age of 90, from a car/truck accident, I had the opportunity to spend time with a younger brother going through the safety deposit boxes of my parents. In doing so, we saw their collection of “treasures” not only in notes to each other, but in a collection of writings by others which enriched their own beliefs and values.

I also started a “treasure drawer” a number of years ago with notes and cards from my children, my wife Neville, brothers and sisters, and valued friends.

For this article, I decided that I should open my special “treasure drawer” to see if something I had filed away would better reflect my feelings at the present time. I ran across several items and topics that struck my fancy, and I would like to share them with you.

Treasure #1: The Blessings of Living in America

The first item was a treasure I came across in an article from the summer of 2007 titled “If the World were a Village of 100 People.” At the time I began writing this article, I had no recollection where I had come across this document. I reread the article and decided it should be Treasure #1.

My trusty assistant, and friend, Debbie Hinton, researched the article and provided me with interesting background information about the author. The genesis of the article was written by Donella H. Meadows and entitled “If the World were a Village of 1000 People.” One version of the “state of the village report” has been updated and revised to 2005 statistics and was revised to reflect “if the world were a village of 100 people.” I am pleased to share it with you.

- The village would have 60 Asians, 14 Africans, 12 Europeans, 8 Latin Americans, 5 from the USA and Canada, and 1 from the South Pacific
- 51 would be male, 49 would be female
- 82 would be non-white; 18 white

- 67 would be non-Christian; 33 would be Christian
- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 67 would be unable to read
- 50 would be malnourished and 1 dying of starvation
- 33 would be without access to a safe water supply
- 39 would lack access to improved sanitation
- 24 would not have any electricity (And of the 76 that do have electricity, most would only use it for light at night)
- 7 people would have access to the Internet
- 1 would have a college education
- 1 would have HIV
- 2 would be near birth; 1 near death
- would control 32% of the entire world's wealth; all 5 would be US citizens
- 33 would be receiving – and attempting to live on – only 3% of the income of “the village”

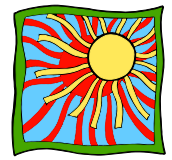


So if you had enough to eat today, clean water to drink and water in which to bathe, a roof over your head, clothes to wear, a healthy family, and the privilege to worship your faith in any way, pause and reflect on the good fortune of where you were born in this place and time. When we are all wrapped up in our own problems with family, worries about the lack of rain and crop prospects for this year, our health, and the numerous other things that occupy our minds, we take for granted our grand country and forget to be thankful that our section of the “village” is blessed.

It is rare that we are able to conceptualize the blessings of Treasure #1, the blessing of living in America.

Treasure #2: How Love is Communicated

Treasure #2 was received from a special friend, Carolyn Renfro. Carolyn is a former grade-school teacher who is helping us home school a young boy from Jamaica. Carolyn is one of those special people who unexpectedly comes into your life and “laces the hours with sunbeams to brighten up your day.”



Carolyn recently shared with me the concept of:

Love Language

Love language is expressed by:

Gifts

Touch

Words of affirmation

Service

Quality time

Those of you who have been given the privilege of raising children know well the importance of each of these elements of love language, not only with your own children, but with your spouse and those other special people in your life.

***Dr. James Dobson says
L-O-V-E is spelled T-I-M-E.***

Gifts – Sharing something of value with your child or loved one.

Touch – Perhaps the greatest gift of all. (I learned this from the children living at The Nest Children’s Home in Jamaica.)

Words of Affirmation – Confirming your belief in the loved one’s “gifts.”

Service – Valuing the time you have been given to share with your loved ones and significant others.

Quality time – Quality time cannot be scheduled. It occurs unexpectedly when we spend time with our loved ones.

Treasure #3: How Love is Lived

The third treasure I came across was a small book titled "Great Quotes from Great Leaders" and was compiled by Peggy Anderson. This book was published by simple truths®, The Gift of Inspiration, www.simpletruths.com.

Peggy Anderson completed her compilation in 2007. A total of 33 great leaders are mentioned in the book. I have selected several quotes of Mother Teresa to share with you.

MOTHER TERESA (1910-1997)

"Mother Teresa... is revered for her lifelong dedication to the poor, most notably the destitute masses of India.

In 1928, at the age of 18, she went to Ireland to join the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary and shortly thereafter traveled to India to work with the poor of Calcutta. After studying nursing, she moved into the slums of the city where she founded the Order of the Missionaries of Charity. In 1971, Mother Teresa was summoned to Rome to be awarded the first Pope John XXIII Peace Prize.

Wonderful quotes from Mother Teresa follow:

**"Kind words can be short
and easy to speak,
But their echoes are truly endless."**

**"I have found the paradox,
that if you love until it hurts,
There can be no more hurt."**

"Good works are links that form a chain of love."

**"If you can't feed 100 people,
then feed just one."**

**"If we have no peace,
it is because we have forgotten
that we belong to each other."**

**"If we want a love message to be heard,
it has got to be sent out.
To keep a lamp burning,
we have to keep putting oil in it."**

**"If you judge people,
you have no time to love them."**

**"In this life we cannot do great things.
We can only do small things with great love."**

**"Intense love does not measure,
it just gives."**

"Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls."

**"Let us always meet each other with a smile,
for the smile is the beginning of love."**

**"Love is a fruit in season at all times,
and within reach of every hand."**

**"We ourselves feel that what we are doing
is just a drop in the ocean.
But the ocean would be less
because of missing that drop."**

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Another thought shared with me by my friend,
Carolyn Renfro:

*If I don't live a life of love:
Nothing I say will matter.
Nothing I know will matter.
Nothing I believe will matter.
Nothing I give will matter.
Nothing I accomplish will matter.
Love is a command.
Love is a choice.
Love is a conduct.
Love is commitment.*

If we do not take the time to think about what's really important in life, we will live a cluttered existence, missing those opportunities to accomplish something worthwhile. We are all born with a purpose in life.

***Our life's journey should be to discover
what that purpose is and to share it in
service to others.***

I would like to dedicate this column to Carolyn Renfro. Carolyn is not only a cherished friend, but also one who exemplifies the qualities of love that I have attempted to share with you.

Until the next time -- Think on these things!

Sincerely, Philip Lawson
