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Christian perspectives

Bless and Be Blessed!

During my childhood years, on my way home from school, I would stop along the country roads on most spring and fall days to pick my dear mother a bouquet of flowers. Some would call them weeds, but really, they are flowers growing in God´s garden! Mom would put them into a jar and I do not recall her ever complaining about the ants or the occasional spider or bug that rode home with them. Some of my bouquets were collected from the long neglected gardens of an abandoned house. The peonies always came with ants!

This past week, while doing long overdue yard work, I picked a big bouquet of long stemmed, bright and sunny dandelions and placed them in a canning jar, just as mom would have done.

I remember now why I had to pick so many flowers to keep mom supplied. It seems that most of my offerings of love perished within 24 hours ? as did my dandelion bouquet. Their beauty is magnificent but fleeting. The expression of love though lingers on and on.

Mother´s Day has recently passed and we anticipate Father's Day shortly. When is the last time you told your parents how much you love and appreciate them? Oh, but you might be saying, ?My parents are long in the grave, it's too late now.? Or, perhaps, ?You don't know what awful parents I had. It would be a lie to say I love and appreciate them!? The Bible specifically instructs us in Exodus. 20:12 to ?Honour your father and your mother. . .? It goes on to give us a promise stating ?. . . so that you may live long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.? This is not a give so that you get situation but the truth is, when you give them honour and express appreciation, you too will be blessed. Let's face it, there are few absolutely perfect biological, adoptive, or step parents. It is a fact, all parents make mistakes ? some just more than others! Sometimes to love someone takes a determined act of will.

All this to say, you need to honour your parents.

Just prior to Mother's Day 1989 I wrote my mom a lengthy letter thanking her for all she meant to me. I spoke with her on that special day of celebration, excited to know she would soon receive my surprise letter. It was two Sundays later before I had opportunity to speak with her again. The problem was, she was in a hospital bed in a coma, having suffered a massive brain aneurism early that morning. She died far too young the following Sunday, June 4, 1989 without regaining consciousness. Dad told me how blessed and touched she was to receive my letter and she had shown it to others. A couple of weeks before my dad passed away in December of 2010 I expressed to him what he meant to me. Once again he told me how much my letter many years prior had meant to mom and to him. He thanked me for the many little love notes that as a young child and teen I tucked into his suitcase when he was on the road as a long distance truck driver. He acknowledged that it must have been hard to love him because he was an alcoholic, was hard to live with at times, and he did not know how to express love or affection. After he passed away, I was touched to find within his belongings some of those little love notes, most full of grammar and spelling errors. He had saved them, with some going back over 50 years!

It has been said that when giving words of rebuff or criticism, speak them. When giving words of love and appreciation, write them. Putting pen to paper, in fact blue ink to white paper, makes a lasting impression that lives on far beyond the moment. It is never too late to put pen to paper. Even if the intended recipient is in the grave ? God knows and you know that you took the effort to express your love in this powerful and sometimes cathartic way. I encourage you to write, bless and be blessed!

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