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WORDS FOR LIVING MINISTRIES

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Fall 2020

Dear ones,

I am recovering nicely from the heart attack, the heart surgery, and the surgical emplacement of the heart monitor; and everything is working nicely. I am again working out in the weight room at the YMCA, regaining strength and steadily losing weight (10 more pounds in the past month). And, because I am being treated by so many physicians, and weighed at every visit, I stay thoroughly weighed. I love it!

The last four years of a cycle of injury, surgery, sickness, therapy and recovery have left behind an unfinished book, a great deal of unfinished, important writing projects, and a pile of unanswered mail. I am still trying to get my feet back under me and go back to work on these things, including all of that accumulated mail.

I still need to go to New Orleans to make plans with my secular publisher, who is also a dear friend; but, although I once spent a lot of time in New Orleans on business, and was very comfortable there, after all that has happened, I am not sure that I am ready to make the trip alone. My friend Dale Beauguez hopes to drive me there soon, and then we will be heading for Kentucky at long last.

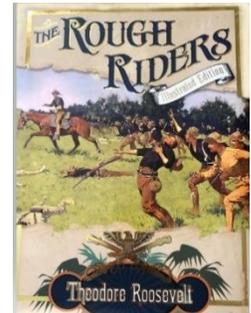
My daily work on the Bible Study Guide goes on, fine-tuning, and sometimes revising, the text, and I love it. Our excellent Bible Class is still meeting in its virtual classroom, and, with each book we study, excellent editing and refining occur. It is great to have Marty, Sally and Joe and a few times Melissa in the "zoom" group!

Thank you for caring, praying and for your patience with me. I'm going to make it. -- Tom

Patriotism--Then and Now--a Vivid Contrast.

In my campaign to regain my health and get back to work, I am often awake in the night, trying to go back to sleep; I pray and I read.

Lately, I am reading Teddy Roosevelt's wonderful 1898 book, "Rough Riders," about his unit's fighting in the Spanish-American War. Those men were struggling not only against the Spanish soldiers and Cuban guerillas, but against the heat, malaria, yellow fever, hunger, heartbreak, exhaustion and the tangled, hilly jungle terrain.



At one point, exhausted, hungry, and sleep deprived, and at the end of a period of day-and-night fighting, with severe casualties, quiet came at the end of the day and the regimental bands played the National Anthem. I quote: "...as the bands of regiment after regiment played the 'Star Bangled Banner,' all, officers and men alike, stood with heads uncovered [hats and caps removed as a sign of respect], wherever they were, until the last strains of the anthem died away in the hot sunset air."

Think of those exhausted, hungry, grieving soldiers, with the mangling and deaths of friends and beloved leaders still as fresh in their memories as the taste and smell of blood, forgetting all of that to stand, uncovered, in respect for multiple and mingled renditions of our national anthem. And compare it with the images of our immensely wealthy professional athletes, with their \$15 million dollar mansions, \$200 thousand dollar foreign cars in their garages, \$10 thousand dollar diamond studs in their ears and noses, in their clean uniforms with expensive protective gear, getting ready to play a game, for millions of dollars, and refusing to stand for one quick rendition of that same National Anthem.

Something is terribly wrong.

Pray and vote--the very survival of our republic and our freedom depends on it.



Food for Thought: Autumn Leaves

Soon we will begin to see the colors of autumn—the oranges, reds, and yellows. This gift of color is something for which I thank the Lord. He didn't have to send us this beauty to soften the transition from summer to winter, but He chose to.

Fall color is interesting too in that these exquisite hues were there in the leaves all along—even during the summer—but we couldn't see them. Chlorophyll, the substance that enables trees to make their food, is green, and its powerful green pigment dominates the color of the leaves, covering up the oranges, reds, and yellows. In autumn, however, chlorophyll production winds down (and will finally stop) as the tree approaches winter. With the chlorophyll out of the way, we can see the yellows, oranges, and reds that were actually there in the leaves all along.

People are like that too. They often have good qualities--patience, kindness, depth, diligence, humility, etc.—which we fail to see. A crisis (or just some simple noticing on our part) will often reveal to us good qualities in people which were there all along.

Finally, it is with the best timing that God blesses us with the colors of autumn. He knew the time of year when we would need it to brighten our days. May you also brighten the days of the people around you. -- In Him, **Sally Mahoney**

From Marty's Corner of March 2013 but ageless.

Social Justice is one of the buzz words interspersed between *diversity* and *global warming* (now called Climate Change because there is no global warming) in today's culture; it is most often used by used by "progressives." For over a century, whole books and dissertations have been written about social justice without ever offering a definition of it. It just floats in the air as if everyone will recognize it when or if it appears. The vagueness is required because when one begins to define it, one runs into distressing logical problems.

Social justice as a secular concept, distinct from religious teachings of some denominations, emerged mainly in the late twentieth century as a tool of the far left / socialists. It becomes a device of intimidation used to gain power of (legal) oppression, and those who use the term assign it to social systems rather than to individual people. Therein lies the overall problem because "social justice" systems assign a regulative directive, and the focus is on power rather than virtue.

Ask anyone who uses the term, whether a politician, teacher or pastor who promotes it, to define "social justice" for you. After a disbelieving stare, most will stumble on how "we" need to take care of the "disadvantaged" or some such group. Who decides who belongs in those groups and who decides who "we" are? The simple answer is that those in power would make those designations, making sure they exclude themselves from responsibility.

God created individual people, not a group or herd. Each person is special and needed. The word "social" is never found in the Bible while the word "justice" is used 28 times and three-fourths of those 28 times, it is coupled with "judgment"—God's judgment. The other times that it is used discloses the outcome of His judgment and justice. Justice is to be a part of each individual's daily life as the Lord leads each, but beware of those who try to entice you to a group's brand of "social justice" because

Thus says the Lord: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come, And my righteousness to be revealed..." Isaiah 56: 1

Milestones

Died: Ronald "Ron" Petrie of Union City, TN was "Bub" to some of us as he always had a smile and was ready to listen to you with his helpful heart. – July 10, 2020

Died: Robert "Bob" Travous of Olney, IL, a US Navy Korean War veteran who loved the Lord with all his heart. His love bore fruit in Christian gatherings at his (and Ruth's) home, at his church and in missions to the Congo, Africa and Red Bird Missions in KY where he built churches and spread God's word. – July 31, 2020

Died: Fran(ces) Bach in Hannibal, MO who loved being a "Grandma" and the big family dinners she and her husband, Lysle, prepared together. Fran, a long time Christian served in various positions with Gideons International -- 11 August 2020

Treasure and use each day for our Lord --

