

Thought for the Day

October 31 – November 4, 2011

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*W*ORDS CAN SAVE A LIFE

Dana Reeve, the singer-actress who married the strapping star of the “Superman” movies, devoted herself to his care after he was paralyzed. Dana died of lung cancer just eighteen months after her husband’s death. She was 44.

Christopher and Dana Reeve married in 1992. Life changed drastically for the young show-business couple three years later when Christopher suffered near-total paralysis in a horse-riding accident. In his autobiography, “Still Me,” Christopher wrote that soon after the accident he suggested to his wife, “Maybe we should just let me go.” She responded, “No way! I’ll be with you for the long haul, no matter what. You are still you and I love you.”

According to Christopher, “Those were the words that saved my life.”

November 1, 2011

*T*HE STAKES THAT BIND

Bob Biehl, in his book “Master Planning,” tells about a conversation he had with a man who trains animals for Hollywood movies. He asked the trainer, “How is it that you can stake down a ten-ton elephant with the same size stake that you use for this baby elephant?” “It’s easy,” said the trainer. “When the elephants are babies, they try to tug away from the stake countless times before they realize that they can’t do it. At that point their phenomenal memory kicks in. For the rest of their lives they remember that they can’t get loose from the stake.”

Humans are somewhat like elephants. Often when we are young, some unthinking, insensitive person says something negative about us, like “He is not good at planning” or “She is not a good leader” or “Their dream will never make it.” Often at those moments a mental stake is driven into our subconscious. Even years later those stakes can still bind us.

The living Christ is always moving around among believers, snatching stakes out of our minds, opening up doors that we thought were closed, and whispering in our ears, “With God all things are possible.”

November 2, 2011

COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE

One day during the Great Depression, a frightened old man was hauled before the magistrate in a New York City night court. The charge against him was petty larceny; he was starving and had stolen a loaf of bread.

The person presiding over the court that night happened to be none other than Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. La Guardia sometimes sat in for judges as a way of keeping close to the citizens of the city. La Guardia fined the old man \$10. “The law is the law and cannot be broken,” the mayor pointed out. Then he took a \$10 bill out of his own wallet and told the man he would pay the fine for him. Then La Guardia turned to the other people in the courtroom and “cited” each of them for living in a city that did not reach out and help its poor and elderly, leaving them no alternative but to steal. The mayor fined everyone in the courtroom 50 cents each. Then he passed around his famous fedora to collect the fines, and then turned over its contents to the amazed defendant. The hat contained almost \$50. The old man left the courtroom with tears in his eyes.

Mayor La Guardia understood Jesus’ admonition: “Blessed are the merciful...”

November 3, 2011

*T*HE PERILS OF PRIDE

A Methodist district superintendent (DS) came to preach at a church that a young rookie preacher was serving. The congregation was pitifully small in number. This disappointed the DS considerably. During the singing of the first hymn, he whispered to the young preacher, “Didn’t you advertise the fact that the DS was coming to preach today?” The young preacher whispered back, “No sir, but somehow they found out anyway.”

As Scripture reminds us, “Pride goeth before the fall.”

November 4, 2011

A NEEDED LESSON FOR EVERYONE

Peter Marshall was a celebrated preacher and the former chaplain of the U.S. Senate. Sadly, he died of coronary occlusion at the age of forty-six. After his first heart attack, a friend asked, “Peter, I’m curious to know something. What did you learn during your illness?” Peter answered promptly. “I learned that the Kingdom of God goes on without Peter Marshall.”