

This is the Day...Thursday

May 5, 2022

A Familiar Face

“For now, we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” (1 Corinthians 13:12)

During my childhood, Gastonia was a very simply, small town. Most of the major restaurants and big box stores had not yet arrived. There were a few “mom and pop” restaurants and the old standard McDonald’s and Hardee’s. There were the big department stores like JC Penny and Belk’s. But this was before the day when a Walmart or Target was on every corner. Most of our shopping was at the Woolworth Store downtown or at the A&P Grocery Store. Even though I had been in those stores hundreds of times and knew the layout like the back of my hand, Mom was always careful to keep me in sight. It wasn’t that she was afraid that someone would bother me. She was afraid that I would get focused on something interesting and wander off.

I was excited when Mom shared the news that a new store was coming to town. It was the Richway Store. Richway began operation in the late 1960’s and was the predecessor to our modern-day Target Store. Mom told me that on Saturday morning we were going to check out the new Richway. That morning Mom and I walked into the brand new Richway with the shiny floors and stuff stacked on the shelves to the ceiling. It was awesome. I followed Mom as she went from department to department. She picked out some jeans for one of my brothers and some laundry detergent and hair spray. As we walked down the aisles, I noticed the toy section just ahead. I asked if I could go check out the toys and Mom agreed with a strict warning. “Do NOT leave the toy department!” I agreed and off I went.

After a few minutes in the toy department, I noticed the bicycles and basket balls in the sporting goods area, just across the aisle. I wandered over there for just a minute to check it out. I was amazed at all the different balls and bats and fishing rods that were available. I looked at all the pocketknives and the camping gear. I’m not sure how long I was in sporting goods but, I knew Mom must be looking for me when I heard the announcement over the store intercom system. “Would a little boy named Chris please come to the front of the store.” Oh my! Mom was looking for me. As I made my way to the front of the store, all I saw were the faces of strangers, probably wondering why a little boy was in the store alone. I went to the front, frantically looking for Mom but could not find her. I searched every face for a familiar one. And then I spotted Mom. As I ran toward her, I could see the relief come over her face.

It is easy for us to feel lost in the crowd sometimes. During those times of isolation, we look around for a familiar face. Someone who might understand. Someone whom we know and who knows us. Often it is difficult for us to see the face of our Lord during those troubling times. Our view of God is obstructed by our sinfulness and our humanness. We only see the reflection of Him as in a mirror. On this day which God has given you take heart, the day is coming when all those obstacles will be removed, and we will see Him face to face. You may only know in part right now. You may only see a reflection right now. But there is a day coming when you will know Him fully and be face to face with your Lord. Imagine the relief on His face when He sees that His child has been found.