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PRESENTS

## *Frankly Speaking Notes . . .*

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Ed Smithson, Editor

### UNFOLDING A ROSE

My eldest son sent me a quotation yesterday.

**"I have no yesterdays, Time took them all away,  
Tomorrow may not be, But I have TODAY."**

It reminded me of a story I heard many years ago.

I have heard the story told in several different ways but they always come out with the same lesson. Some things belong only to God and it is only He that can make sure it comes out right. There are times that, even for His children, they do not know the right outcome and trying to force it only makes it worse.

"A young, new preacher was walking with an older, more seasoned preacher in the garden one day and feeling a bit insecure about what God had for him to do, he was inquiring of the older preacher. The older preacher walked up to a rosebush and handed the young preacher a rosebud and told him to open it without tearing off any petals.

The young preacher looked in disbelief at the older preacher and was trying to figure out what a rosebud could possibly have to do with his wanting to know the will of God for his life.

Because of his high respect for the older preacher, he proceeded to TRY to unfold the rose, while keeping every petal intact...It wasn't long before he realized how impossible it was to do so. Noticing the younger preacher's inability to unfold the rosebud while keeping it intact, the older preacher began to recite the following poem..."

## UNFOLDING THE ROSE

It is only a tiny rosebud,  
A flower of God's design;  
But I cannot unfold the petals  
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers  
Is not known to such as I.  
God opens this flower so sweetly,  
When in my hands they die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,  
This flower of God's design,  
Then how can I have the wisdom  
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust in Him for leading  
Each moment of my day.  
I will look to him for His guidance  
Each step of the pilgrim way.

The pathway that lies before me,  
Only my Heavenly Father knows.  
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments,  
Just as He unfolds the rose.

I apologize for not knowing the author, but the lesson is significant.

Far too many times we get so concerned about what “WE” can do or things we think we are supposed to do, we ignore the bigger picture. The Bible teaches us so many times that God is in charge of the universe and also in charge of our lives, if we will let Him. From time to time we come to realize it is not so much what we want as much as what HE wants for us. “...the LORD of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like his majestic steed in battle.” (Zechariah 10:3)

God told Israel when they were about to receive the land of Caanan, the “promised land,” that he cared for it and would look after it. “But the land

that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.” (Deuteronomy 11:11-12)

God also make the same kind of promise to us, “[casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.](#)” (1 Peter 5:7) To Israel He made the promise that if they obeyed Him and did way He said, He would be with them. Certainly He cares for us today as well.

Sometimes we get so anxious about our lives or the events of it, we forget that someone higher is in control and will direct it as He wills. We just have to let go and let Him have His way. My friend, mentor, teacher and counselor, the late Batsell Barrett Baxter, sincerely believed that God had a plan for every life. He wrote a book about it, “Every Life A Plan of God.”

God did just put us here or let us exist to fritter away our time with meaningless activities. There is a purpose for our existence and it is high time we let Him direct our lives in “unfolding the petals” thereof.

Our nation is in grave trouble in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We apparently are moving farther and farther away for the ideals upon which this nation was established and therefore farther away from God. Now is the time to let Him have his way so we can be true to higher ideals and to Him.

(All scriptural quotations are from the English Standard Version.)

Ed Smithson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Smithson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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