TAKE TIME TO APPRECIATE

 One of the definitions given for “appreciate” is to be fully aware of or to realize. I shared a devotion several years ago that related to a time when, traveling to Birmingham every day, I completely missed the fall colors. One of the more beautiful areas for color is between Allgood and Remlap along highway 75. I was so caught up in the cares of school and church that I completely missed a whole season of beauty. So I write this devotion today to encourage you to take time and appreciate some things worthy of your attention.

 Since this is the season, do not miss the beauty that surrounds us. We live in an area where we have such a variety of trees and bushes that provide some of the most fantastic autumn color that can be viewed anywhere. To fail to realize it is to miss out on the very handiwork of God. To realize it is to see that God is daily making evident changes to our surroundings.

 If you are a parent, learn to appreciate all the seasons of your children. I know that sometimes we can’t wait for them to reach the next stage but do not rush them along. Learn to enjoy this place and time in their life, knowing they will not return to this time again. We often say that a two year old is in the terrible twos but it is during this stage that they learn to talk, run, play, explore and climb. To rush through this time is to miss it. You may think that your senior in high school is quite expensive with senior portraits, class ring, cap and gown, etc. but they are excited and you have the opportunity to share in that excitement. Don’t miss that opportunity to appreciate your child and his or her achievement.

 I would say the same thing for the children. Learn to appreciate the seasons of your parents. I did not grasp the fact that my dad was getting old until he died. It seems that I missed a special season of his life by being too caught up in my own. I tried to pack in missed years in just a couple of months which is impossible to do. When you think about it the older years are like the autumn of life. The vigor of life is dying down like the sap in the trees. The hair is changing color like the leaves. Some hair is falling out like the leaves. Still there is a special beauty to be enjoyed if we take time to appreciate the moments we have with them. We find out some things about them that we never knew. They will teach us history that we can learn from no other sources. We will often discover that they are our biggest cheerleaders and prayer warriors.

 Maybe you get the picture. Take time to appreciate what you can while you can. May God’s blessings be upon you.

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram