

Fathers

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long...
– Exodus 20:12 –

Father's Day is around the corner. I frequently exhort young people to beware of dishonoring their fathers and mothers. There is a special, life-long blessing attached to the soul who genuinely magnifies his or her parents' noble and good influence, and likewise minimizes their faults and shortcomings.

My dad suffered under the twin terrors of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's for the last decade of his life. I learned many lessons from him throughout his life, even (and perhaps especially) by that bed of affliction. I tried to condense my gratitude in the following that I wrote for him on what would be his last Father's Day before he graduated to glory. I pray it blesses...

*When mirror's image stares at me upon each passing day,
And I muse afresh upon what down beneath the surface lay
I find a confidence about the man I've come to be
Because it is my dad's reflection in my soul I see
He taught me strength and beauty, the sound ethics of a king
Lessons which through daily life so resonantly ring
His example, back to which time after time I quickly tread,
Was wrought within my soul through youth's fast-flowing riverbed
And now through the strange conduit of suff'ring's icy hand
He's teaching me new lessons I just ne'er would understand
For see, 'tis by this bed where I have opportunity
To lift up supplications like those he once said for me
And as we wait for Jesus to eradicate the Curse
Which villain is to friend and foe alike so coldly terse
I find great consolation that on Heaven's blissful shore
My hero shall again be what he was, and even more!
But until then by faith we simply press on, being true
Mindful that our Savior knows well what we're going through
And He, the greatest Hero that all earth has ever had
Shall abundantly reward one day my most heroic dad
So, if you wonder why the next you suffer some hard thing
Rest assured that to the Lord you may like a child cling
For He oft permits the hard things to the noblest of the race
So that we may learn yet even more about His matchless grace
And so, to all who read these words please lend me now your ear
I owe more than could be repaid to the hero who lies here
And though he cannot talk to you, this seed I now have sown –
My dad is just the greatest mortal man I've ever known
And now each day as I reflect so oft upon his love
Which served as earthly vestibule to the Father's from above
I'm grateful with more earnestness than ever I have had
For this gift from God's most gracious hand – my most heroic dad*

-- D. Murcek