



(Pearl Smyer, age 88, leading a 2009 all class parade in a 1935 Plymouth)

AGE 88 AND STILL STITCHING

1 Corinthians 13: 12

“Now we see but a poor 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.”

There are many times during our lives when we question our abilities to discern the still small voice of God. Are we really fulfilling the destiny God has planned for our time here on earth? Is what we are doing truly His plan for our lives or one of our own making?

Also, the hustle and bustle of busy daily schedules prevents us from enjoying the quiet time of reflection necessary for communing with our Heavenly Father. Perhaps it is humanly impossible for people to peer through the rear view mirror of their lives and identify God's silvery thread that has been woven carefully through each of their seasons on this earth. As mere humans, it probably is an impossibility to wrap our feeble minds around His perfect plan for each of us, anyway. After all, He knows us better than we know ourselves.

Today, at age 88, Pearl's motto is to never spend much time looking back over life, but has chosen to keep moving forward instead. She believes self pity and spending time desiring life to be as it was in earlier moments are poor uses of energy. They only serve to impede your journey here on earth.

In addition, at this season of her life, she still believes her gift to be so common that it can't possibly be God's destiny. Regardless of these feelings, she just keeps on stitching those threads of faith.

However, due to tired older eyes, the ability to sew the stitches into fabric must be accomplished through the help of a machine, rather than by hand, now. Even though dark colors offer an additional challenge, she has not lost her love for making quilts. At one point, when her girls called to say hello, she was concentrating so hard she didn't hear the phone. She was on a mission to use all the old clothing from her closets in what she labeled as scrap quilts.

However, God had other plans for her life. There are some points on our journeys when we think the old tanks are out of gas, that our Father has just begun the process of bringing His destiny into fruition.

One day while speaking with her son in law, Pearl learned about an organization called CASA. (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Her son-in-law, Harvey, had just become a volunteer for CASA, and was advocating for the rights of two children. When hearing that many children living in foster homes move from one location to another possessing only the clothes on their backs, and maybe a quilt, it touched her deeply.

Thus, in her usual style of determination, she saw a new vision for all the old scrap quilts she had been putting together. The only adjustment necessary was to make size changes. She even reached out to her friend, Ruby, and convinced her to join with the final tacking of many of the quilts. This motivated Ruby to go on a mission of finding material, batting and thread to support the project.

Suddenly, large black bags filled with completed quilts arrived on her son-in-law's door step marked in great big letters, CASA. As she busily made one quilt after another, she was totally unaware that God was at the helm,

steering her right on course. The quilts she was making were being delivered into the arms of welcoming boys and girls as cherished possessions. The warmth they were feeling from their softness was a direct reflection of God's abundant love. For it is through each of our lives that His love is radiantly illuminated. After all, the greatest fruit of the Spirit is love.

Recently, the last large black bag of Pearl's quilts arrived with a small torn piece of paper on which was written the number 107. Yes! Praise God! That 88 year old soldier for Christ and her side kick, Ruby, had just completed 107 quilts for God's precious children. Did the numbers scratched in pencil mean Pearl and Ruby were sitting admiring the work they had accomplished? Could their voices be heard over the telephone boasting to friends about their work? Oh no! Instead, Pearl could be found in her sewing room working on number 108 for the two friends to tack. God's soldiers of the Cross were obediently marching forward.

Most of the time, we do not know that we have touched the lives of others. We just have faith that God will guide us in the direction of His choice. However, there are precious moments when God gives us a peek deep into life's mirror demonstrating how love affects others.

At this point, dear reader, turn the page and enjoy one of these priceless moments. Your hearts will be full to the brim with emotion. We truly have been created by an awesome God! His love will reign forever and ever! Hallelujah!