

## REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 4/3/2017

---

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ." - Eph. 2:4-5



I captured this image of a red-shouldered hawk as it came to feed on a raccoon carcass I recently put out on our property. As it fed, I almost felt sorry for the raccoon who could do nothing to stop the assault on its body. I found myself wishing the raccoon would come to life and escape. But it was dead. And dead bodies are unable to respond to my, or anyone else's, wishes. This is how scripture refers to those outside of Christ. They are not sick or drowning or in need of repair, they are dead. And dead people are unable to respond to anything, let alone the gospel. Not only are they unable, they are unwilling. The hearts of the unregenerate are darkened. They are dead to the things of God. The gospel is foolishness to them. Preaching to dead people seems like an exercise in futility. So why bother? What can possibly be done by us to bring the dead to life? The answer is nothing. But, because of the great love and mercy of God, he chooses to breathe new life in dead bodies when and where he pleases to awaken them to repentance and faith. For those of us who have experienced this new life from the dead, our responsibility and honor is to share the gospel with all we encounter, knowing that at times the message will fall on the ears of some whom God has made alive to hear it. And those so made alive to the things of God will surely embrace it. It is God's business to awaken, it is our business to proclaim. This raccoon is dead, but the people God has put into your life may very well be formerly dead people the Spirit of God has brought to life. Give them what they now crave. They will be more than ready to receive it. - John