

REFLECTIONS – Thoughts on Nature and the Christian faith



This is Annie, a young doe I have written about before. I photographed Annie a few weeks after she was born, lying hidden in tall grasses on our property. As she grew, Jo and I saw her and her mother frequently in the woods behind our home. Then, Annie's mother was gone. We assumed she had been hit by a car. Annie is now an orphan, struggling to survive in a world she was unprepared to face. Other deer have rejected her and chased her away from any food we put out. We eventually provided Annie with a safe place to feed and hoped she would make it through the winter. But several weeks ago, we noticed something was wrong. She was unable to put any weight on her right hind leg and her right front foot was swollen badly. Perhaps she, like her mother, was hit by a car. As she hobbled along, obviously in pain, we wondered if she was going to make it. Lately we have noticed her body become more and more emaciated. My heart aches for Annie. I wish I could do something to alleviate her pain. Nature can be cruel at times. Do you know people like Annie, people who through no fault of their own seem to get the worse the world has to offer? These people, unlike the promises of the health and wealth preachers, hobble through life in pain and suffering but still manage to hold firmly to their faith. One of the promises of God to Christians is that we will suffer. The grace of God and the love of Christ sustain us when the darkness of the world overshadows us. How can God love such poor, suffering, beaten down creatures such as ourselves? It is because his essence is pure love and he delights in showering love upon the unlovely. I am convinced God loves me, not because of who I am, but because of who he is. There will come a time when all suffering will end and boundless health will be given. It will be given to me, to you, and I truly believe, to Annie as well. - John