

Daylilies and Dallas Jent
Published in Tribune-Star – July 8, 2017

In Madison County, Indiana, there lives a man named Dallas Jent. When Dallas retired, he planted a few daylilies in little space in his backyard. He planted more—different varieties and sizes—and soon Dallas had planted and landscaped his way into a huge daylily garden. He made paths amidst the flowers, put in some wrought iron benches, and he even built a gazebo so he could sit in the shade and enjoy his daylily paradise.

But Dallas wasn't content with that. He began to make his own hybrids of daylilies by cross breeding what was in his back yard. He and his wife, Melanie, love to have people come by during the peak of daylily season and walk through the profusion of his well-maintained daylilies. You won't go home empty-handed, either, because Dallas will give you daylily bulbs and starts and teach you how to start your own little patch of daylilies.

Thanks to Dallas, the patch of ground outside my door is full of blooming daylilies. For about a month now, we've had daylily blooms in all shapes and colors. If Dallas was here, he'd tell you the names of all the varieties. I know we have a Lady Melanie and a Queen Elizabeth in honor of our two granddaughters, but for the life of me I don't know which one is which. All I know is that we've blooms of all sizes and colors, and I've loved every single one of them.

Dallas taught me that daylilies bloom for only one day, that there are several blooms on a stalk and several stalks to a plant. The blooming season lasts from mid-June to late August depending on weather conditions, and since they require a minimal amount of care, one daylily plant can be enjoyed most of the summer. The only for Dallas' daylilies? Gorgeous.

Each daylily reminds me of that King James passage I memorized as a child: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Luke 12:27-28, KJV).

When I look at each day's bloom, I say, "Wow, God, that daylily is precious." Then I remember what Jesus said about the lilies of the field, and I imagine God shaking His head and saying, "You think that is precious. Have you looked in the mirror today?" And then I feel loved. Really loved. More precious than the most precious of daylilies.

Likewise, my friend, do you know how precious you are? You are more radiant than Dallas Jent's daylilies and more glorious than the richest of kings. Go ahead, look in the mirror. You'll see that God cares for you and clothes you with what you need. You'll feel loved and precious to God. When you look in that mirror, I'm sure you'll see that I'm right.