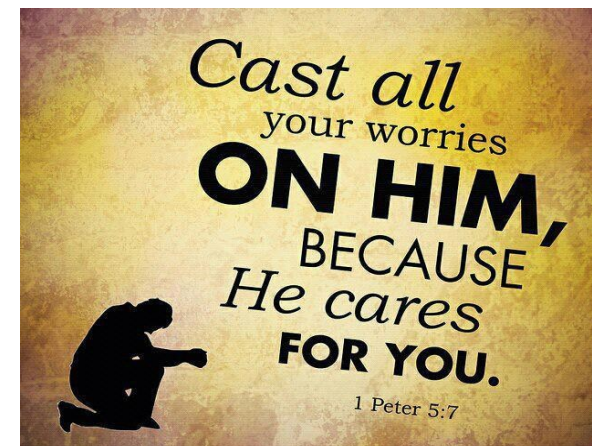


The Bible tells how a man lame from birth went daily to the temple and begged for alms. One day as he was at the gate, the people he asked included Peter and John. Peter told him *"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."* Peter took the hand of the lame man, and the Bible says he was *"walking, and leaping, and praising God."* That day many followed Peter and John to hear more after seeing the man lame from birth walk. Acts 3:1-9 KJV

We have a friend in our small town who was born with one of her arms shriveled; it was only developed to her elbow and then there is just a little digit that resembles a finger at the end. Long before I got to know her, I was told that she could type as fast with one hand as most people did with both. I was a little skeptical!

Then one day, she walked into a needlework class that I was teaching. I immediately thought "What am I going to do with her?" We were working on fine linen and there was always someone complaining because the work was so fine and she couldn't thread the needle, or she couldn't see, or something. I thought as we started "How am I going to handle this; she'll never be able to do the work." Then, the class started and everything seemed to be going along fine and I realized that she was doing very well. She never complained; she was ahead of everyone else. But, the big thing I noticed that day was that no one else complained. I think they realized how much they had been blessed. She was smiling, talking with everyone, and was doing a better job than some of the other people who had both hands! I learned that day not to judge what a person could do by her physical appearance. Since that time, I have grown to know her as a friend. She is always happy. She is happy for what she has and constantly praises her Lord and Savior. She is doing everything she wants to do. She said her parents deserve the credit because they never made her feel that she couldn't do something because she had the partial arm. They always supported her in a positive way.

Yes, the lame man was blessed that day; he was able to walk. We don't know his name. He was another one of those who is unknown to us, but known to God. We may be unknown to many people, but we are always known to God. We are blessed everyday if we just take time to look around. We too, should be leaping for joy and praising God.



Peter and John were also blessed because they cared. And, because they cared, God sent them the healing power to help the lame man and God further helped them in their ministry. It was a win, win, win situation!

When we help someone, we often feel blessed. Maybe that is why we are told we get more blessing by giving than receiving. Oh, it is nice to get. But sometimes a person needs a little help or a hug or a greeting, or just someone who cares enough to ask "How are you doing?" And then listens. Kids need to be noticed and told they have done well. Older folks need to be appreciated for the knowledge they have accumulated over the years. All need to be thanked for taking time to help someone else, and not always thinking of self. Then the one giving and showing mercy receives more. It is sort of a paradox. The more we give, the more we receive.

NEVER GET TIRED OF DOING LITTLE THINGS FOR OTHERS. SOMETIMES THOSE LITTLE THINGS OCCUPY THE BIGGEST PART OF THEIR HEARTS.



When you pass
thru the waters,
I will be with you;
and when you pass
through the rivers,
they will not sweep over you.
When you walk
through the fire,
you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze.
For I am the LORD,
your God.

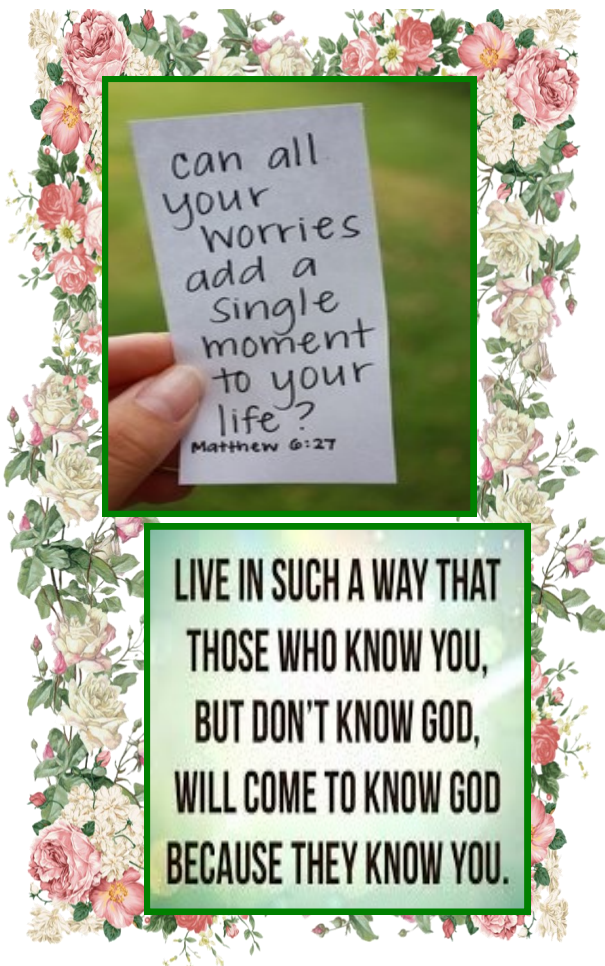
Isaiah 43:2 & 3a

Eugene Peterson, in THE MESSAGE, translates the above parable this way: “You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.” But, it takes time. It takes time away from thinking about self and thinking about others and how we can help them. When we realize this, we think more of others and quit dwelling on ourselves and what we can do to help ourselves. We can help ourselves immensely by helping others. When people see us coming does it put them in a thankful mood?

If we are humble in spirit, we will realize our own sin and our need for God’s grace. When we are down and out, it is much easier to feel God’s love when we surrender our cares to him. I have felt wronged at times and allow myself to be miserable until I put

it is God’s hands, and realize that He can do it. I can’t. Together though, we can have a wonderful relationship that allows me to forget the hurt someone did and allow myself to quit feeling sorry for myself. I’m not saying, I will forget it. I know I am supposed to, but that is much easier said than done, but I can’t continue to allow that to hurt my life and my relationship with God and others. I will be given the peace that comes from God.

Then, what a multitude of blessings we receive as we help others to know Christ. We also receive more knowledge of His power and a wonderful feeling of helping others know our Lord and Savior.



Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to be merciful to those around us. Help us to show we care in everyday situations for we know that we will receive blessings untold. As we go through today, help us to find someone to give a positive greeting. Even if it is just that they are wearing a nice blouse, or shirt. If we need to send a card or give someone a telephone call, help us to do it for Your sake because You have given us so much. Amen.

1. Is asking a blessing - For the one asking? For the one being asked?
2. How can giving a part of us to someone else be a blessing for us?
3. How can we dare to believe, act, and realize God is in control?
4. Have you ever given of yourself and been sorry afterwards? Why?
5. What impact can our visiting someone have on them, on us?
6. How can we handle being hurt by someone when we don't feel that anyone understands or cares?
7. How far down do we have to allow ourselves to go before we realize that God does care and as the song says “He’s only a prayer away.”

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“As soon as I
saw you, I
knew some-
thing good
was going to
happen”
Pooh

