

LAMPLIGHTER

JUNE 2009

THEME: “Under God’s Watchful Eye-Compassion Fatigue”

LUKE 12:6-9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. {10} Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Gal 6:9-10 NIV)

Dear Fellow Workers in God’s Kingdom,

I think, at least by observation, that Americans are some of the most generous people in the world. I am astounded by the amount of money that is raised by the many and various telethons today. There is the Muscular Dystrophy Association, American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, AND American Heart Association, who are just a few to raise funds to battle the health issues that plague Americans. We have also moved from being solely financial supporters of such movements, to becoming personally involved in helping others in need. Groups throughout our society and church volunteer to help the victims of natural disasters. Many have journeyed south to help those who lost homes and loved ones during Katrina, Rita, and countless other storms that wreaked havoc on the lives of many. **What can you do in your community to help someone?**

I applaud all who have taken such an active role in reaching out to one’s neighbor in need no matter how small or insignificant the act may have been at the time. These random acts of kindness and deeds of compassion toward others, as described in Matthew 25 (of being hungry and giving someone something to eat, or thirsty and giving them something to drink) are truly Christ-like things to do. (**Mat 14:14 NIV**) “When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.” (**Mark 1:41-42 NIV**) “Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ {42} Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.” If at any time you had compassion – a deep yearning in your bowels to have pity and be moved with inward affection and tender mercy towards another person - good for you! Great job! Well done, good and faithful servant! The Spirit of God’s power is working in your hearts and lives, but do not stretch yourselves too thin, so that you do not grow weary.

According to the above text, some were becoming weary of doing good. Perhaps like ourselves, they were saying or thinking things like: What am I getting out of this anyway? Or, no one seems to appreciate what we are doing here. Not one person has thanked us! If by chance we are suffering from “burn-out” or compassion fatigue, we might begin to ask ourselves: What’s happening to me? Why do I feel abandoned? Where can I go to give up? Or what do I do now? All of these thoughts may be symptoms of becoming weary in doing good. **What do you do to rejuvenate or to charge your own batteries?**

Here might be some helpful suggestions. The number one rule for a caregiver is that he/she must first take care of himself/herself. In other words, make and take time for yourself. It sounds like a selfish thing to do, when helping others becomes a top priority. However you will accomplish much more for others and be more effective with them if this step is added to your routine. How often in Scripture does it say that Jesus went off by Himself? Another suggestion is to be in God’s Word. It is of utmost importance to remain connected to our source of power. **Read John 15:1-8.** How many times in those few verses does Jesus say remain in me? According to these verses, can we do anything apart from Him? The next suggestion would be to spend time in prayer. Again, following Jesus’ example, note the times that Jesus prayed. What were the affects of those prayers? Though there are many more suggestions that could be made, the last one addressed at this time would be to talk to someone – especially someone who has gone through the same experience with you.

Close with prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, Benediction, and Song – #45 “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”