



LWML CNH CHRISTIAN LIFE LINE

MAY 2024

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I am newly back from the CNH District convention in Redding and fired-up! What a blessed time of worship, song, study, learning, and fellowship! It is always a pleasure to visit with like-minded women from California, Nevada, and Hawaii who have not been among us for a few months. So good to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Matthew 25:31-40

I have never been in real need. That is a blessing in itself. I have wanted lots of things and maybe even coveted a thing or two! Every day I have had enough food, clothing, and shelter to be comfortable. When I had an actual need, I had parents, family, and friends to help me. Mostly, I have had a God who loves and cares for me. He accepts me (and you) and calls me (and you) His child. God loves me (and you) so much that He forgives my (and your) every sin, no matter how awful it might be.

God sent His son, Jesus, into the sinful world to live a sinless life and suffer a horrible death on the cross in our place, so we could be forgiven and live in eternity with Him. That is the real blessing. It is also the cause of the following story. I love Him back so much for His grace and mercy to me, a sinner, that I look for ways to serve Him by serving others. If that sounds familiar, it is from our LWML mission statement!

A couple of weeks ago, I went to the drug store. As I walked up to the door, a gentleman asked if I could spare some money for food. I told him I was headed into the store and would bring something out for him. I asked what he wanted to drink and went inside. After collecting food for him and the items I needed, I headed to the register. As I stood in line, I heard someone complain that a “pan-handler” was standing out in front and they did not like that! Wow.

As I gave the gentleman his food, a smile spread across his face. As he reached out very dirty hands, I noticed that he was missing several fingers making it difficult for him to grab the food. I suddenly remembered the “helping hands” bag I had from the Modesto Gospel Mission. I told him to wait as I hurried to my car to grab it from the front seat. Inside the bag were simple hygiene items and information about new life at the Mission. He thanked and blessed me, as I did him, and went off to enjoy clean hands and a tasty snack.

My intention here is not to show how “pious and Christian” I am, nor is it to condemn the complaining customer. It is to show that when we know Jesus, our crucified and risen Savior, we have a different outlook on the world. Will the gentleman be hungry again? Yes. Will he be dirty again? Yes. Will he need a bed tonight? Yes. Does he feel seen and cared about, dare I say loved, today because someone saw him as a hungry man and not as a pan-handler! We heard this passage in Scripture from Jane Hoffmann at the Convention, “**For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.** Ephesians 2:8-10

To paraphrase Donna Snow (in her study, “Chosen”), Even before the dirty, missing-fingered gentleman needed a snack God prepared this work for me to do! As Scripture says, in Romans 5:8, “**but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**” ‘Us’ includes each of you,

me, and homeless individuals who just want to be seen by their fellow citizens. Jesus gave His life for our salvation, making us righteous in God's sight.

How do you respond to the homeless population? Do you ignore them and hope they will go away? Do you have a Jesus heart that loves them and feels compassion on them? Perhaps, you, like me, have been told by local police and Gospel Mission not to give the homeless money. Perhaps you do not carry cash or are not headed into the _____ store. A "good afternoon" or a smile and a nod conveys that you see them as a person. It brings a sense of respect to a person who may have lost all hope.

If your church does not have care bags for helping the homeless, it may be that you are the person to start that ministry. It is possible that God prepared that good work in advance for you to do!

If you enjoyed this newsletter, please share it with others and let me know! Also let me know if there is something specific you would like me to write about. I'll give it a try!

Have a joyful May! You are blessed to be a blessing!

I love you all,

Cathey