

A Life Well Lived

I was recently reading Michael Card's book "The Walk" and he had a great quote from his mentor Bill Lane. Bill said, "When God gives a gift, He wraps it in a person." Although he was obviously speaking of the incarnation of Christ, I think he also meant that God sends others into our lives for us to give to and receive from.

I was blessed to receive the gift of a special person in my life while I was a student at Arizona State University. It was there that I came to faith in Christ through the witness of some fellow college students. Eventually, I met the man called Elmer, who was the man behind a witnessing and discipleship program on campus.

Now you wouldn't imagine a less likely person as Elmer to be a campus minister and mentor. He was a tiny man that was well into his forties and completely confined to a wheelchair. Elmer had been through physical therapy and re-learned how to walk 6 times only to again be forced back into his wheelchair when his severe rheumatoid arthritis flared up. He told me that the burden and inconvenience of the wheel chair had worked out great for him because when people would wheel him around in the chair they were his captive audience and he would mentor them. I can remember wheeling him around and him doing that very thing with me.

Even though many years have passed I can still remember all of Elmer's little sayings like:

"Only one life will soon be past, only what is done for and in Christ will last."

"He came to die on a cross of wood though he made the hill on which it stood."

"He could have written His message in the sky or etched it in Men's hearts, but instead He chose men."

Each year many men and women were impacted by this unassuming wheelchair bound man and they would forever be changed by his sweet spirit in the midst of suffering. The year I graduated there were well over 20 people who went into full time Christian work and that was representative of the many years he ministered until he passed away a few years ago. This one little man who the world probably looked on with pity or sadness was actually the biggest man on that campus of thousands of students. I'm confident that he had a greater impact than any, and perhaps all, of the professors on campus.

A life like Elmer's really took away all my excuses. He was not well physically and often was out and about while in the midst of debilitating pain. His legs were useless and his hands were horribly disfigured by the arthritis so that he could barely turn the pages of his bible. The list of limitations he had was long but in his life we can see a shining example of what each of our lives can be when we fully commit ourselves to God and to building up others. Truly a life well lived...

ISA 3:10 Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds.

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