

BE A LEGEND IN YOUR TIME

By John F. Hall

Phylliss Halle wrote: "Happiness is a fleeting moment of joy. Contentment is finding peace in what you have, what you are, and what you have accomplished. Having the serenity to know which one brings lasting goodness into your life is wisdom." In 1 Timothy, Chapter 6, Verses 6-12, are these words: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into a temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."



Most of us have memories of Pastors and teachers that lifted our spirits and gave us inspiration to show care and kindness. Some gave us lessons about the five attributes of contentment. The first is satisfaction; the second is lack of envy; the third is humility; the fourth is discipline, and the fifth is abhorrence of greed and corruption. I believe that I am content with my life and what I have accomplished. The other day, I looked out my kitchen window and observed a baby wild rabbit laying down grazing on fresh clover. It was shaded by a bush with yellow blooms. That rabbit did not seem to have a care in the world.

I was in Murray, Kentucky on business last week. I stopped at the local Cracker Barrel restaurant. I went inside to request a take out order. The young cashier called a person from the kitchen to take my order. After giving this person my order, I decided to look at the items for sale in the retail section of the restaurant. I decided to purchase two bags of orange slices candy for adopted granddaughters, Skyler and Lexie Crisp. When they were students at Heritage Christian Academy (HCA), I volunteered in their lunchroom. At that time, their dad, Jason was deployed in Iraq. Skyler did not want to eat her lunch, so I would bring her orange slices candy & Cosmic brownies. I told her that she has to eat half of her lunch before she could eat the treats I gave her.

The cashier, as I was paying for the take out order and the orange slices candy, told me this story. She said that her grandfather loved the orange slices candy. So when she came to visit him, she would bring him a bag of orange slices candy. She told me that every time she rings up a sale of orange slices candy, it reminds her of her grandfather. Some day, when I've passed away, and someone gives Skyler and Lexie some orange slices candy, they might remember me. On May 19th, I went to Lexie's graduation from HCA. One of the the things that I gave Lexie and Skyler was a small white bag with orange slices candy and brownies.

Lexie's graduation was held in the Bruce Convention Center. After the graduates were given their diplomas, their families were asked to come forward and pray with them. I was asked to join them in that unbroken circle of prayer. Returning to my chair, I told

Lexie's dad, Jason, that Lexie's graduation completed my time with Heritage Christian Academy. It began in 2000 when I enrolled my oldest granddaughter, Andrea. I promised her that I would come and eat lunch with her every day that I was not away on Army Reserve duty or Commonwealth business. I would bring my sack lunch and sit in her kindergarten classroom, on a tiny chair, at a tiny table with six of her other classmates. I kept that promise for 10 years, and later became a volunteer in the lunchroom.

I became very fond of all the students. At the time, HCA had almost 400 students, preschool and K through 12. Few students knew my real name. Andrea called me "An-Father," and all the staff, students, and teachers called me "An-Father." I would bring a small bag of individually wrapped peppermints. I would give them a peppermint after they recited their favorite Bible verse, and only after they finished eating their lunch. I was going broke buying peppermints as more and more students wanted a peppermint. Sometimes, when I would see a student sitting by themselves, I would go over and sit across the table, and ask them what was the matter. They would share their world with me. Their faces and their voices will remain forever in my heart.

One of my favorite songs is called "Forever." It was written by David Foster, Eva Loggins, and Kenneth Loggins. These are some of their lyrics: "And now, while we're alone, and all is said and done, now I can let you know. Because of all you've shown, I've grown enough to tell you, you'll always be inside of me. How many roads have gone by? So many roads left unspoken. I needed to be by your side if only to hold you. Forever in my heart, forever we will be. And even when I'm gone, you'll be here in me forever..."

After Lexie's graduation ceremony, a reception was held. One of the former HCA students recognized me, even though I was wearing a face mask. My family physician, Dr. Daniel Butler, cautioned me to wear a face mask when ever I went inside a public building. He said my last chest X-ray shows my lungs have smoke damage. He does not want me to become another mortality statistic because of my compromised immune



system. I walked over to this tall student and gave her a hug. We had a short conversation. As I walked away, I heard her say this to the elementary student that she was with: "That's An-Father, he's a legend."

I never considered that caring, showing compassion, being kind and just listening to students would have them feel that I am legend.

Don Gibson wrote the song, "A Legend in My time." These are a few of his lyrics: "If heartaches brought fame in loves crazy game, I'd be a legend in my time. If they gave gold statuettes for tears and regrets, I'd be a legend in my time... If loneliness meant would acclaim, everyone would know my name, I'd be a legend. in my time...". I think Don was having a hard time in his life when he wrote that song. I feel that through compassion, caring, and kindness, anyone can become a legend to someone else. I give a part of myself away every time I write a story, and when I give that story away.

I met Glen Campbell back in 1982 when I was on a security detail for Governor John Y. Brown's chief adviser, Larry Townsend. I believe that the Kentucky AG, Major General Billy G. Wellman recommended me. Glen came out a door in the down town Louisville convention center. I did not have the time to say more than "hello Glen." I was looking for Larry because he was late getting to the next party. When he was in a room talking to the Governor's supporters, VIPs, and guests, I would hold up my arm and point to my watch. Larry would see me when I did that, he know I wanted him to get to the next party. This was the Kentucky Derby Day and it was the mad rush to 20 different events. It was an exciting time.

Curt Sapaugh and Bobby Austin wrote the song, "Try a Little Kindness." It was a hit song for Glen Campbell. These are some of their lyrics: "If you see your brother standing by the road with a heavy load from the seeds he sowed, and if you see your sister falling by the way just stop and say, 'You're going the wrong way'... Don't walk around the down and out, lend a helping hand instead of doubt. And the kindness that you show everyday will help someone along their way. You got to try a little kindness. Yes, show a little kindness. Just shine your light for everyone to see. And if you try a little kindness, then you're overlook the blindness of the narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets...".

I was in Walmart in Hopkinsville and always in a hurry, and another HCA graduate, from Andrea's time at HCA, saw me and said to her sister: "That's An- Father." It is because of Christ's grace upon grace upon grace, and His inspiration, that allows me to continue to write my stories. My parting comment is for you to be a legend to someone in your life.

John F. Hall

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