

July 2005: Being A Blessing

by Aaron Greenway

Have you ever had anyone to encourage you? There are folks who will come running to you to say hello the moment they see you. They are so happy to have run into you. They hug you and tell you how special you are. This feels pretty good! I have a friend in Mexico named Aly. She is an example of a person who has blessed the lives of the people around her. She recently told my wife and I that she is now involved in a ministry for very sick kids. She has a very tender heart because she has experienced her own pain in life. Then there is my friend at church, Eduardo Acre. He is a big, black guy from Panama. He always greets me and tells me how much he cares about me. I see him much like my own father, as a spiritual example. Lastly, I have my wife, a blessing to me each and every day with her words of encouragement, her hugs, and more importantly, her prayers. She doesn't just pray for me, but for those God puts in her path.

At the same time, we have had our fair share of difficult people, people that treat the church like a business, scrambling for the top whatever the cost, and beating up whoever happens to be in their path, emotionally and spiritually. It may even be a "generational thing" where they are simply imitating their parents' bad example. Difficult people are those who come with their own agenda. They generally will not pay you any attention unless there is something in it for them, or if, somehow, you are good for their P.R.

Just the other day, we saw a person that we knew at the gym who gave us the cold shoulder. Also, a few weeks ago, we were invited after the church service to spend some time with the director of a mission's agency to ask him and his wife some questions. Others had been invited as well. We all thought that we would take turns having a discourse with the gentleman. Unfortunately, one of them decided to sit close to him, close enough to dominate the entire "Q and A" session, so that no one else was able to speak with him. How considerate, eh?

There are people who genuinely care about people, and there are those who do not. When you see both extremes, which would you choose to be? There are people who believe that the only way to do God's will is to set a goal, and then do it

Christ never tried to take advantage of people. When they tried to make him king, he refused. Cesar Augustus ruled over the region back then, but Christ was never after his position, but instead he was headed for the cross on Calvary to die in our place. As a result, we have to decide who we are going to be, one who blesses, or one who "uses" people to get what he wants. In the kingdom of God, no one should ever be a "big shot". There is no place for arrogance, but instead for those who have come to serve. We will see that the best way to get anywhere in God's kingdom is by living by faith, not by climbing on the backs of people we don't even care about.

disregarding the lives of people as if they were obstacles in their way. They seem to have good, Biblical reasons for doing what they do. But if we look closer, we will discover that God's will is never used to take advantage of or abuse someone else.

Then, there are the servants who will minister to those that God has put before them. They know how to treat people and they know how to love. They even know how to be a blessing, recognizing that people in their path are there to be blessed by us. This doesn't mean that we shouldn't go where God leads us or that we shouldn't take advantage of opportunities to minister. But it never means that we treat people as if they were dispensable. Unfortunately, there are churches and seminaries that are run exactly that way. I have seen Christian musicians that came and sang in a venue and then when people tried to talk to them, they were blown off and mistreated. At that pace, sooner or later, the bottom will drop out of their ministry. The ministry is not a place so we can get comfortable, but instead it is so we can get OUT of our comfort zone.

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"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)"

Something to ponder...

Your brother,
Aaron Greenway