

A Family Ride on a Fire Truck

After years and years of doing good and getting no credit for it, saving people's lives and never being thanked for it, a Detroit firefighter decided he'd had enough.

"I was fed up," he told a reporter who interviewed him after a bizarre episode. "I was fed up right to here," he said, pointing to the top of his head.

"Did you ever feel that way, I mean really fed up?" he asked the reporter.



What the fed-up fireman had done the day before was to hop in the biggest fire truck at his station, turn on all the lights and sirens, drive to his house, pick up his wife, pick up his daughter at kindergarten, and take the family on a siren-screaming ride through the city of Detroit.

He finally returned the \$200,000 truck to the fire station – sirens still wailing and red lights flashing – and then, to top things off, he submitted his resignation to the Detroit Fire Department.

Recognition? He got it. All through the city.

You've heard it said: No good deed goes unpunished. Or – put in more theological terms – if you love, you get hurt.

Just because you don't get rewarded or appreciated, however, doesn't mean you aren't appreciated or won't get rewarded in some fashion. You may never know about it.

Some people would rather die than show their appreciation or say thanks. There is a *Peanuts* cartoon strip in which Lucy is crying bitter tears over a decision her mother has made. She wails, "You promised me a birthday party, and now you say I can't have one. It's not fair!"

Enter Lucy's brother, Linus, who calls her aside to offer some advice: "You're not using the right strategy," he says. "Why not go up to Mom and say to her, 'I'm sorry, dear mother ... I admit I've been bad, and you were right to cancel my party, but from now on I shall try to be good.'"

Lucy thinks about it. She even rehearses the little speech to hear what it sounds like coming from her. Then she thinks about it some more. Finally, in the strip's last panel, she cries out, "I'd rather die!"

(more)

Again, some people would rather die than be in a beholden situation. But even though they can't show it, they're grateful.

Appreciation is defined by *Merriam-Webster* as “a feeling or expression of admiration, approval, or gratitude.”



I don't have to tell you that caregiving is hard. And those who surrender their lives to the purpose for which they are called deserve recognition – although many of them would quickly say they don't do it for the applause.

Nevertheless, the various awards programs that Life Care and Century Park conduct are extremely important – and heart-touching.

More often than not, however, it's the *little* things that count – a smile, a hug, a whisper of “well done” at the end of a long day for an associate. Those considerations cost a little time and effort, but no money. Let's be sensitive to the value they produce.

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up (1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter