

A Life of Selling Onions

Mark Moody, in his book *In Search of Renewal*, tells about old Pota-lamo, who sat at the market in Mexico City with 20 strings of onions for sale.

An American tourist asked, “How much for a string of onions?”

“Ten cents,” said Pota-lamo.

“How much for two strings?” the tourist inquired.

“Twenty cents,” the merchant replied.

“How much for all 20 strings?” asked the American.

“I would not sell you 20 strings,” answered Pota-lamo.



“Why not? Aren’t you here to sell your onions?” the tourist persisted.

“No,” replied the old merchant. “I am here to live my life. I love this marketplace. I love the crowds and the red serapes. I love the sunlight and the wavering palmettos. I love to have friends come by and say *buenos días* and talk about the babies and the crops.

“That is my life. For that I sit here all day and sell my 20 strings of onions. But if I sell all my onions to one customer, then my day is ended. I have lost the life I love – and that I will not do.”

When I read that story, I was reminded that work is more than an opportunity to earn a living; it is a blessing of God. And I reflected on the calling of Life Care associates, who love their residents, who love the families with whom they interact, and who love the people with whom they serve.

Is the career we have chosen hard? Indeed, it is, demanding our best effort. But it brings a special satisfaction, an inner peace that is its own reward.

The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep (Ecclesiastes 5:12 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter