

## A SOLDIER'S PLEA

Years ago, a soldier was finally coming home after having fought in Vietnam. He called his parents from San Francisco.

"Mom and Dad, I'm coming home, but I've got a favor to ask. I have a friend I'd like to bring with me."

"Sure," they replied, "we'd love to meet him."

"There's something you should know," the son continued. "He was hurt pretty badly in the fighting. He stepped on a land mine and lost an arm and a leg. He has nowhere else to go, and I want him to come live with us."

"I'm sorry to hear that, son. Maybe we can help him find somewhere to live," the father said.

"No, Mom and Dad. I want him to live with us."

"Son," said the father, "you don't know what you're asking. Someone with such a handicap would be a terrible burden on us. We have our own lives to live, and we can't let something like this interfere with our lives. I think you should just come home and forget about this guy. He'll find a way to live on his own."

At that point, the son hung up the phone. The parents heard nothing more from him.

A few days later, however, they received a call from the San Francisco police. Their son, said the policeman, had died after falling from a building. It was believed to be suicide.

The grief-stricken parents flew to San Francisco and were taken to the city morgue to identify the body of their son. They recognized him, but to their horror they also discovered something they didn't know: their son had only one arm and one leg.

The parents are like some who find it easy to love those who are good-looking or fun to have around, but who are uneasy about people who inconvenience them or make them feel uncomfortable.

Thankfully, the associates of Life Care and Century Park are men and women who accept people as they are, and treat them with respect and compassion. Such an attitude is a hallmark of their identity – people of commitment, believing they serve God by serving others.

Finally ...

*A man has not lived until he has almost died. For those who have fought, life has a flavor the protected will never know. (Signed, Vietnam Veteran)*

The above was found written in pencil on the metal seatback of a bus in northern Thailand many, many years ago.

– Beecher Hunter

