

Holding the Hand of Jesus

Approaching Christmas, with all the focus on the birth of the Savior, would you like to hold the hand of Jesus? Is that possible, you ask?

The late Mike Yaconelli – writer, satirist and church leader – told about a man who did.

The story started, he said, with a deacon in his church “who wasn’t deaking. He just didn’t do what he was supposed to do as a deacon.” One day, Yaconelli said to the deacon, “I have a group of young people who go to the old-folks home and put on a worship service once a month. Would you drive them to the old-folks home and at least do that?” The deacon agreed.

The first Sunday the deacon was at the old-folks home, he was in the back with his arms folded as the kids were doing their thing up front. All of a sudden, someone was tugging at his arm. He looked down, and there was this old man in a wheelchair.

He took hold of the old man’s hand, and the old man held his hand all during the service. The next month, that was repeated. The man in the wheelchair came and held the hand of the deacon. The next month, the next month, and the next month.

Then the old man wasn’t there. The deacon inquired and he was told, “Oh, he’s down the hall, right-hand side, third door. He’s dying. He’s unconscious, but if you want to go down and pray over his body, that’s all right.”

The deacon went to the room, and there were tubes and wires hanging out all over the place. The deacon took the man’s hand and prayed that God would receive the man, that God would bring this man from this life into the next and give him eternal blessings.



As soon as he finished his prayer, the old man squeezed the deacon’s hand, and the deacon knew that his prayer had been heard. He was so moved by this that tears began to run down his cheeks. He stumbled out of the room, and as he did so, he bumped into a woman.

She said, “He’s been waiting for you. He said that he didn’t want to die until he had the chance to hold the hand of Jesus one more time.”

The deacon was amazed at her words. “What do you mean?” he asked.

(more)

“Well, my father would say that once a month Jesus came into this place, and my father added, ‘He would take my hand, and He would hold my hand for a whole hour. I don’t want to die until I have the chance to hold the hand of Jesus one more time.’”

The story inspires me, and perhaps it does you. Christmas works when we let Jesus take us to help a neighbor, take us into the food line of a soup kitchen, or take us into an attitude adjustment, a generous spirit, an encouraging word.

And for those of us in Life Care, we have the opportunity every day to be in a nursing center.

We can be that hand of Jesus. And when that happens, Christmas happens.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Colossians 3:17 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter