

Overcoming a Clubfoot

Phillip Carey, an orphan and the main character in the novel *Of Human Bondage*, was born with what was once called a “clubfoot.” Because of his deformity, his school classmates often made fun of him and excluded him from their boyhood games.

In one poignant scene, Carey is convinced that if he prays hard enough, God will heal his foot. He daydreams for hours about the reaction of his classmates when he returns to school with a new foot. He sees himself outrunning the swiftest boy in his class, and he takes great pleasure in the shocked amazement of his former tormentors. At last, he goes to sleep knowing that when he awakes in the morning, his foot will be whole. But the next day brings no change; he still has a clubfoot.

Although just one of many disappointments for young Carey, this proves to be a pivotal point in his learning to cope with the harsh realities of his life. Drawing upon an inner strength he did not know he had, he decided that his clubfoot would not determine his destiny. How he responded to it, however, would make all the difference in his life. If he viewed it as a crippling deformity, he would live a limited life. Instead, he began to see his handicap as nothing more than an obstacle to be overcome, and it did not hold him back.

You, too, may have discovered that life is filled with grand opportunities cleverly camouflaged as devastating disappointments. For Phillip Carey, it was a clubfoot. For the Apostle Paul, it was a thorn in the flesh. Whatever is in your life, do not despair.

With God’s help, you, too, can turn your scars into stars, your handicaps into strengths.

--Beecher Hunter