

Passing It On

A wealthy industrialist, a Mr. Ward, stopped every morning at a certain shoeshine parlor. An Italian boy named Tony always shined his shoes.

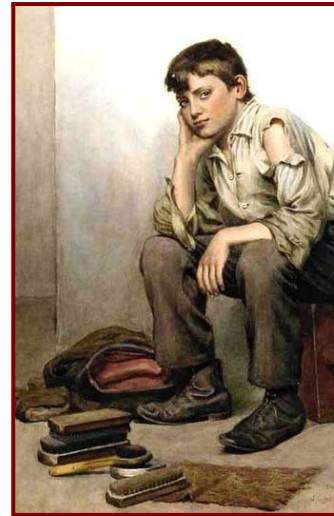
Tony liked Mr. Ward and the feeling was mutual. One morning, Ward asked his young friend, "If you could have one wish fulfilled, Tony, what would that wish be?"

The boy stopped, looked the gentleman in the eye, and replied: "I would like to study medicine. Above everything else in the world, I would like to be a doctor, but I have to take care of my mother."

Deeply moved, the philanthropist said, "Tony, suppose I told you that I would give you – not lend you – enough money to see you through the university and medical school. What would you say?"

With a smile on his face, the boy answered, "I would say you wouldn't do it. That would be a lot of money."

"I will do it, Tony. You are shining your last pair of shoes."



The boy laid down the shine rag and kissed the shoes that were spotted with tears.

Their friendship continued. Arduous years of schooling were completed. Time passed. Tony married. He enjoyed a lucrative medical practice.

Then one day, a beautiful car stopped in front of Mr. Ward's office. The young doctor hurried up the familiar stairway. The meeting of the two men was a tender one.

Dr. Tony grinned and said, "This is a great day for me. Here is a check for all the money you have spent on my education, with interest."

Mr. Ward took the check, looked at it for a moment, endorsed it and handed it back. "Tony, I never expect any financial returns from the investments I make in human life. Anyhow, God has credited me with it on His books, so it does not belong to me. Take it and find another boy who is worthy. Send him through school on it. Maybe someday he will hand it back to you."

Two conclusions are apparent from this story:

1. The favors we receive, what someone does for us, should be paid forward – to someone else who can benefit.
2. When we help another, we are – as the Bible instructs – laying up treasures in heaven.

– Beecher Hunter