

Question: Are You Jesus?

Tony Campolo – a sociologist, pastor, author and public speaker – tells a wonderful story about a minister friend and a deacon in his church he was trying to help.

The pastor wanted the deacon to open up and let the Holy Spirit lead him. Finally, the Spirit led the deacon to conclude that there was one thing he could accomplish in service to God and others. He could take the youth group to a nursing home.

Once a month, the youth group went to the facility to lead a church service for the residents. So the deacon went, and stood in the back of the room for the service. While the young people were performing, an old man in a wheelchair rolled over to the deacon, took his hand and held it all during the service.

That was repeated for several months. One Sunday afternoon, however, the old man in the wheelchair didn't show up for the usual service. The deacon asked the nurse in charge, "What happened to that man?"

"Oh," she said, "he's near death. He's just down the hall, the third room. Maybe you should go in and visit him. He's unconscious, though."

The deacon followed the instructions and walked into the man's room. He was lying there in bed with tubes attached.

The deacon walked to the bedside and took the hand of the old man. Instinctively, led by the Spirit, he said a prayer. And when he said, "Amen," the old fellow squeezed his hand, and the deacon was so moved by the moment that he began to weep and shook a little.

So overcome by emotion, he tried to get out of the room, and as he was going out the door, he bumped into a woman coming in.

She said to the deacon, "He's been waiting for you. He said he did not want to die until Jesus came and held his hand. I tried to tell him that after death, he would have a chance to meet Jesus and talk to Jesus and hold Jesus' hand. But he said, 'No, once a month Jesus comes and holds my hand, and I don't want to leave until I have a chance to hold Jesus' hand once more.'"

So, what does this story mean for us in Life Care? Just this ...

In the eyes of some of the people you serve, you may be Jesus to them. Through the touch of your hand, the compassion you share, you have, indeed, become Christ's representative in that room or in that building.

And after all, that is what He has called you to do.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter