

## Refusing the Angel's Offer

Once upon a time, as all good stories begin, there was a blacksmith who worked hard at his trade.

The day came for him to die. God sent His angel to the smith, but to the angel's surprise, the smith refused to go. He pleaded with the angel that he was the only blacksmith in the village, and it was time for all his neighbors to begin their planting and sowing. He would be needed.

The blacksmith did not want to appear to be ungrateful, and was looking forward to having a place in God's kingdom, but could he put it off for a while?

The angel left and made the blacksmith's case before God. And God agreed.

Sometime later, after the harvest, the angel returned to bring the blacksmith to heaven. But again, the smith requested that his return to God be delayed.

"A neighbor of mine is seriously ill, and it's time for the harvest," the smith said. "A number of us are trying to save his crops so that his family won't be destitute. Please tell God I am grateful for His blessings to me. But could you come for me later?"



So the angel returned to heaven.

Well, it got to be a pattern. Every time the angel would come to bring the faithful blacksmith to heaven, the smith would shake his head and explain to the angel that he was still needed by someone on earth.

Finally, the blacksmith grew very old and weary, and he prayed to God to send His angel to bring him to heaven. Immediately the angel appeared.

"If you still want to take me home, I'm ready to live forever in God's kingdom," the blacksmith related.

The angel laughed. He looked at the blacksmith with delight and surprise, and said: "Where do you think you have been all these years?"

As a caregiver, you, too, are doing God's kingdom work.

(more)

When you feed a patient unable to do it for himself, when you assist a resident to the bathroom, when you bathe and dress a patient struggling from lack of energy, when you listen, really listen, to a lonely woman with no family tell of her teenage years and marriage, when you spend a hot day with all the laundry to get done, or work those long hours to keep the floors shining ...



When you do all these things, and then some – you are doing kingdom work.

And you are laying up treasures in heaven.

*Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity (Titus 2:7 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter