

The Woman at the Bus Stop

One day a man stopped in a convenience store to get a newspaper. He noticed that the owner of the store had tears in his eyes and kept looking out the window. He asked what was going on.

The store owner replied, "Do you see that bus bench over there? There's a woman who comes there every day around this time. She sits there about an hour, knitting and waiting. Buses come and go, but she never gets on one and no one ever gets off for her to meet. The other day, I carried her a cup of coffee and sat with her for a while."

In their conversation, the store owner learned that her only son lives a long distance away. She last saw him two years ago, when he boarded one of the buses right there, he said, pointing toward the bench.

"The son is married now, and she has never met her daughter-in-law or seen their new child," the store owner continued. "She told me, 'It helps to come here and wait. I pray for them as I knit little things for the baby, and I imagine them in their tiny apartment, saving money to come home. I can't wait to see them.'"

The reason the owner was looking out the window at that particular moment was that the three of them – the son, his wife and their small child – were just getting off the bus. The look on the woman's face when this small family fell into her arms was one of pure joy. And her joy only increased when she looked into the face of her grandchild for the first time.

The store owner commented to his customer, "I'll never forget that look as long as I live."

The next day, the same customer returned to the convenience store. The owner was again behind the counter. Before the owner could say or do anything, the customer said, "You sent her son the money for the bus tickets, didn't you?"

The store owner looked back with eyes full of love and a smile and replied, "Yes, I sent the money." Then he repeated his statement from the day before: "I'll never forget that look as long as I live."

This man had discovered a measure of the abundant life. What is an abundant life?

In Christian teachings, abundant life begins with a new birth, a new relationship with God through faith in His Son, Jesus, and a new relationship with mankind. Abundant life is not about what we have. It's not about what we get. It's not about what we claim. Ultimately, abundant life is about what we receive as a gift from the Lord and to live knowing we are stewards of the blessings of God. Stewardship is not measured by what we have received, but by what we have given.

(more)

At the end of the day, perhaps that is how we know we have an abundant life – when we have shared our life with others. When we have enough of the blessings of God (mercy, peace, love, grace, wisdom, etc.) to share with others, and then actually do it, that's when we truly have abundant life.

It's represented in the answers I frequently get when I ask certified nursing assistants (who have a tough job), why they do what they do: "I feel like I have made a difference in someone's life when I go home at night."

Jesus said: *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly* (John 10:10 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter