

County-Wide Chaplaincy

Thanks you!

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Two Quilts

As we enter this season of fall, my mind always turns to thoughts of thankfulness. I recently was reminded of a young man we met when we visited our daughter in China many years ago. We learned a lot on that trip, and particularly we learned that we have it really good! At that time at least, the students who lived in the dormitory for college had no hot water and little or no heat. That was not a temporary situation; it is just the way it was. I questioned this young man, asking him if it was true that there was little if any heat in his dorm. His response was one I think about often. He replied, "Oh, we have some heat, but I have two quilts!" He said that as if he had won a prize. There is a huge lesson about contentment in his response. He was not looking at what he didn't have, he was joyful about what he did have, two quilts!

This also reminds me of a conversation we had with our grandsons a while back. We were talking about how often kids that have so little are so grateful and so full of joy when they receive something; and that is not always true for the people who seem to have a lot. One grandson immediately stated, "They take it as a treasure, but we take it for granted."

Oh the wisdom in those words! And to be grateful and content not only with what we have, but even with what we don't have. Our young friend in China could have focused on not having enough heat to be comfortable, but instead he focused on the gift of having two quilts.

Speaking of quilts, do you know that there are groups of women from three local churches who voluntarily make quilts so that our chaplains can give them out on calls? It is amazing! These quilts are absolutely beautiful. There are quilts for children, quilts for women, quilts for men, quilts with themes and colors and you name it. Well, you get the picture! What a wonderful gift for our chaplains to be able to give a quilt to a grieving widow or parent or to a hurting child. These women faithfully, and in my opinion tirelessly, quilt away so there is never a shortage; and our chaplains can give freely of this bounty! Thank you, thank you, quilters! What a comfort and reminder that someone cares.

Chaplain Debbie provided this account: "One particular call that left a tender place in my heart was after a precious elderly husband had passed away at his home. I went out to get a quilt to give to his wife. On the way back from my car, I heard the Lord say in my heart, 'Give the one with the deer prints to her.' Upon handing it to her, she began to cry and said, 'How did you know?' She said her husband was an avid hunter and grew up in Montana. She said the quilt was very personal and meant so much to her, and she would cherish it always."

As we enter this season where it seems more people think about thankfulness, a verse comes to mind. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." This is a tall order, but is a great reminder that our peace comes largely in simply being thankful!

Jan Richards

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