

Inspirationals and Administration Tips





The Bag Lady and Thanksgiving Dinner

by Ed Price -- from 'Themestream'

“The greatest among you will be your servant.” (Matthew 23:11 NIV)

It was very cold and a light snow was falling as young Jimmy Dorche piloted his Ford Escort down the street toward the city park. Snow on Thanksgiving was a rarity in this part of the country and it caused almost as much excitement as the traditional turkey dinner, the traditional afternoon of football, or the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on television. But none of these things were on 17-year-old Jimmy's mind at the moment as he carefully maneuvered his car over the blacktop. He had his own tradition to tend to and what he was looking for he would probably find in the deserted park.

Usually bustling with activity, even on cold days, the park was practically empty now. Everyone was home with friends and family enjoying their Thanksgiving turkey. Jimmy was tempted to have a bit more dinner himself, but his second helping sat on the car seat beside him along with a big hunk of Mom's homemade pumpkin pie and a Thermos bottle of hot coffee. Jimmy wouldn't succumb to temptation and eat more today.

For the past two years, Jimmy had established a tradition for himself. He had never suffered a hungry day in his life. The son of an unwed teenaged mother, he was given up for adoption as an infant and was taken in by a Christian family. When he was fifteen, to honor his Lord as well as his parents, he decided to take his second helping of Thanksgiving dinner to the park to share with a homeless man or woman.

His first year, he had found a man who had been on his own since he was thirteen. In the summer he worked odd jobs, but in winter he lived at the local rescue mission where he earned an occasional dollar by cleaning up the place. The second year, he shared his Thanksgiving dinner with an elderly man whose wife had died long before and his children had moved to another city. They never contacted their father nor offered to help him in any way. "I reckon they're ashamed of me," the rheumy old man had said.

Throughout the year, Jimmy often thought about the two men. He had gone to the mission to try to find them, but they were gone without a trace. Now Jimmy wondered who he would meet this Thanksgiving.



As soon as he arrived at the park, he saw a ragged woman sitting hunched over on the bench of one of the heavy concrete picnic tables provided by the city. She wore an old battered red coat and a dark wool cap over her matted, graying hair. Close beside her was the tattered bag that carried all her worldly possessions.

Jimmy pulled the car into a parking place and got out. He took the covered dishes and the Thermos bottle from the front seat and began walking toward the bag lady. When he stood in front of her, she jumped as if she had suddenly been awakened from dozing. She looked up at Jimmy. Suddenly her eyes brightened and she started to speak but, instead, she lowered her head and stared at the frozen ground.

“God bless you, ma’am,” Jimmy said, smiling. “I have brought you some Thanksgiving dinner. Would you do me the honor of sharing it with me.”

The woman looked at the food. She was very hungry -- she hadn’t eaten since last night’s dinner at the mission. She nodded and Jimmy served her food, uncovered the plates, put a napkin and silverware on the cold concrete picnic table, and poured her a streaming cup of coffee from the Thermos. Then he watched her as she ate. Although it was very cold in the park, he felt warm inside. The God of love was clearly at work within him. He loved his tradition and he intended to continue it -- and more -- for the rest of his life.

When the woman had finished, he cleared the table and put the dishes into a pile. He poured another cup of coffee into her Styrofoam cup and closed the Thermos. Then he reached into his wallet and pulled out a twenty dollar bill. He thrust the money into her gnarled hand. Then he reached over and kissed her lightly on the forehead.

“May God richly bless you, ma’am,” he said softly. “And thank you for giving me the honor of sharing my Thanksgiving dinner with you.” With that, Jimmy picked up his dishes and returned to the car.

She had stayed in the city purposely to see him grow, but remained carefully in the background and out of sight so she would not embarrass him or cause him pain. Her own life was a shambles -- time spent in state mental hospitals and, at other times, living on the streets. But she had seen him grow into manhood and was very proud of his many accomplishments. Today, she had longed to tell him who she was, but could not bring herself to do it. Instead she thanked God that He had so richly blessed her today, in spite of her trials.

Tears welled up in her eyes. She had seen her son on Thanksgiving and he had loved his mother.





Very Here

by
Wallis c. Metts

" God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalm 46:1

Little Janie has a book report to give to the whole class on Monday, and she is well prepared. Some kids might be nervous about this, but not Janie. All weekend she practiced, and Monday she rushed to school, eager to make her presentation. When roll was called, the students one by one answered, "Here"-until the teacher uttered Janie's name. But Janie was reviewing her notes, not paying attention.

"Janie", the teacher repeated. "Are you here?"
Jolted from her reading, the little girl blurted, "Yes, I'm very here!"

That's the phrase used for God in Psalm 46. God is not only present- here with us when we need him- he is very here. Like little Janie, He is eager to do his part.

You may experience times when you think God is absent. Certainly he has other prayers to answer, other children to tend to, other problems to solve. But then in the tiniest details of life he reminds you of his presence. "Here," he pipes up. "I'm very here!"



Talking About Terrorism and War with School-Aged Kids

[Alvin Poussaint, M.D. and Susan Linn, Ed.D](#)

(Family Education.com)

These days it is difficult to shield school-aged children from anything in the news. What they don't see at home, they hear discussed on the playground, or even in current events discussions in school. Because American children today are exposed to so much media violence, it's important to help them understand that wars are real.

Let them know that war is terrifying, complicated and confusing.

Share your thoughts and feelings about the causes of and possible solutions to terrorism. At the same time let them know that there is no justification for killing thousands of innocent people.

Discuss your feelings about the issues. You can research the history of the conflict together on the Web.

If you plan to donate food, clothing or money to help the victims, involve your children in the process.

Many people commented that the collapse of World Trade Center buildings looked just like a movie. Differentiate between real violence and Hollywood violence. It may be hard for kids exposed to lots of media violence to recognize the difference and have feelings about it.

