

The “People Behind”

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Throughout the scriptures, there are great stories of great people doing great things for God. Have you ever wondered about "the people behind" all those great stories? Here are some of those people whose names and stories we don't know, but whose efforts and faithfulness made it possible for the other stories to be told:



1. Those who carried wood and helped Noah build the boat, load the animals, and set out on their journey.
2. The Levites who cared for the Temple (especially when they operated the temporary Temple "on the road")
3. The person who cared for, and readied, Nehemiah's horse before that evening ride around the walls of Jerusalem.
4. The people who served Joshua. His loyal friends, servants, and "support team" who encouraged him at night, listened to his worries, and helped him get ready for battle.
5. The disciples who got the Last Supper ready. Who laid out the bread and wine? Who made sure it was all ready?
6. Those who supported Paul, the Apostle. Who bandaged his wounds? Who made sure he ate well? Who encouraged him when he was exhausted or discouraged?
7. The people who cared for Jesus as He was "homeless." Who fed Him? Who washed His clothes?

We get a “glimpse” of some of these people through Paul’s writing, and in Acts. Paul recognized several of his “people behind”:

- “...Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers.” (2 Tim. 4: 21)
- “...The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater.” (Acts 19: 29)
- “...I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.” (Eph. 4: 18)
- “...I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.” (1 Cor. 16: 17, 18)

Throughout scripture, God promises to reward and bless those who care for, support, and encourage others.

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” James 1:27

“...But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6: 1-4

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Philippians 2: 3, 4

“The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'” Matthew 25:40

“Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.” Proverbs 3: 27

God is willing to bless and multiply those who serve Him selflessly and faithfully; but He is quick to caution us all to not forget to care for the needs of others.

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” Psalm 1: 1-3

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3: 5, 6

“Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture Delight your-self in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.” Psalm 37: 3-6

Some of the greatest people I’ve known have been janitors. In my experience of working at churches and at schools, I’ve come to love the “sweet and gentle spirit” that resides inside the heart of a janitor. Oh, I’ve met some grumpy janitors, but the vast majority of them have been people who inspire me to be a better person.

Janitors work hard, work late (or early), and work “behind the scenes” without much recognition. They mop up messes, empty trash cans, clean surfaces, and do all they can to support the professionals around them. They have a “no problem” attitude that pleases God and makes them easy to be around. They are a fine example of the character that God wants us all to have. They have a “person behind” character!



For whom are you a “person behind”? Are you serving someone in such a way as to support his/her success without any desire for recognition? Are you discovering and enjoying the “sweet rewards” of pleasing God “in secret” and knowing that He is rewarding you “in secret”?

If you aren’t a “person behind” for anyone, ask God to open your eyes to who needs you. I’m sure He’s placed you in the path of others who need help, support, or encouragement. Here are some ways to become a more effective “person behind”:

- Listen to conversations around you. Do you hear needs being expressed, prayers being shared, etc? Can you be God’s blessing to those who are speaking?
- Notice the stress on others’ faces. When we are in stressful situations, sometimes a simple word of encouragement can be a “cup of cold water.” Go out of your way to “invade” people’s lives and become a tool of compassion for the Lord.
- Make those over you look good. What is your relationship with your boss or supervisor? Do you work hard at making him/her “look good” in the eyes of his or her boss? Do your work well, and go beyond what he or she expects of you. Then, after your task is completed “as unto the Lord,” ask him/her if there is anything else you can do.

If you aren’t naturally a “person behind” for someone, you may find the above ideas difficult; but I can assure you that you will begin to enjoy God’s blessings as you serve others. Soon, it will be a natural behavior. This is what “becoming a new person” in Christ is all about!

