

What Could Mean the World to Someone

by
Amy Carroll

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalm 90:12 (NIV)

"How are you doing?" she asked. "I heard about the death of your grandmother and have been thinking about you." My eyes widened in surprise and pleasure as I recognized my friend Melanie's voice on the phone. She's a friend I dearly love, but we live long-distance and don't stay in close touch.

I told her about my sadness, but also my joy over the fullness of my grandmother's life. We chatted about old friends, kids and church with the ease that a long-time friendship brings. However, I started to wonder when we'd get to the reason for her call. Finally, there was a pause, and she explained that she needed to go back to her work.

I was stunned. That was it?

There was no other agenda or hidden need? No. Melanie had just carved out the time in her day to call and check on me.

A phone call from a friend is always appreciated. But for Melanie to call meant even more, because she is a young widow whose husband died suddenly. She is dealing with raising children, running a business they used to manage as a couple and all the other curve-balls life inevitably throws her way. Yet she made time in her day just to check in with me. I told her how grateful I was she had been so intentional and kind.

That's when Melanie shared what happened after her husband's death. Worship time at church was when the floodgates of her grief opened. She would often stand and cry throughout the service, pouring out her heart to God and receiving comfort from Him. And there was one woman who often sat by Melanie and silently held her hand.

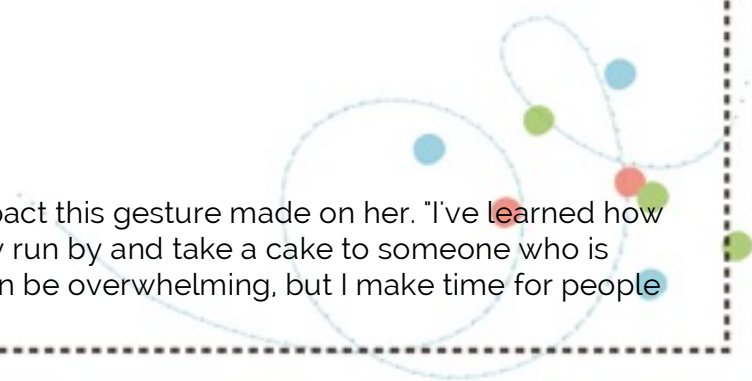
One woman.

In silence.

Offering the ministry of presence.

A profound gift.

Melanie continued, describing the impact this gesture made on her. "I've learned how much sharing time means. If I can only run by and take a cake to someone who is hurting, I do it. All of life's busyness can be overwhelming, but I make time for people



now. People are the most important thing." I thought of how my friend reflects Jesus—of how Jesus made people more important than His to-do list. There were so many He stopped for. Countless faces in the crowds who made Him pause, *just because*.

The woman rejected by others for her many husbands.

The despised tax collector.

The woman who had despaired of ever being healed.

The men who gave up everything to follow Him.

The list could go on and on.

I think about the day's to-do list. A long list. There are lines and lines of things to do that aren't checked off yet, calling for my attention and time. They're all important, but how do I process my list through today's key verse, "*Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom*" (Psalm 90:12)? How do I become more like Jesus, numbering my days aright so that I might gain a heart of wisdom?

I think I'll start a fresh to-do list and take a lesson from Melanie. My new first line on my checklist: "Be more like Jesus. Make people important today."

Dear Lord, I need Your help to plan my day with Your priorities. You know how task-driven I can be. Will You teach me to put people first? Sensitize my spirit to listen to Yours and to pause for people like You would. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Pray and ask God to reveal "just because" pauses that He's created as you go through your day.

When has someone reached out to you with no other agenda than to care for you? How did God reveal Himself in that act of kindness?

Have you ever reached out to someone when they were hurting with no other agenda than to care for them?

Power Verses:

1 John 4:19, 21, "We love because he first loved us ... And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister." (NIV)

John 15:12-13, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." (NIV)

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