

How many times do we just reply “Fine” when we are asked, “Hi, how are you?” We then feel guilty because we are not giving an honest answer. Perhaps we have a headache, a shooting pain in our lower back, a serious illness, or a death in the family. Who would want to hear the truth when they asked innocently, “How are you?” Certainly not the friendly grocery store clerk nor the pleasant bank teller who was taking customer service seriously.

I read about a person who was in a similar situation and prayed, “What can I say to courteous people who simply ask, ‘How are you?’” Hearing about our pain would not do anyone any good. We would all rather hear about the positives in our lives instead of the negative, but we still feel like a liar when we say “Fine.”

To keep the negativity away, this person made a list of all the things she was thankful for such as family, friends, home, etc. Then she wrote she was thankful for God himself – His mercy, His grace, His love, His patience, His caring about the littlest things in our lives.

One morning, while writing her thank-you list, a thought hit her mind like a lightning bolt – Blessed! A moment later, the light dawned and she realized: that is how she could answer those who asked, “How are you?” because the best blessing of all was that God promised He would never leave nor forsake us. He would walk through this day – and this pain -- with us.

Later in the day, she stopped by the bank and the teller greeted her, “How are you?” She answered, “I’m really quite blessed. How are you?” The young teller stopped with the deposit slip held mid-air. He looked up, met her eyes, and with a smile spread across his face, he said, “I’m blessed, too.”

Later, at the hardware store and the grocery store, the response was about the same. Answering “blessed” made people think – and smile. Gratitude made her corner of the world more beautiful. No matter how hard we hurt, it feels better to think about our blessings.

“Heavenly Father, as we enter this holiday season, help us all make a difference in the lives of those around us and bring a little light into a dark world. Help us to remember all the things we have to be thankful for and remind us to share that we are indeed ‘Blessed!’”

“Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving in our hearts...” Psalm 95:2

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