

Daily Devotional, May 26, 2021 Being the Upside to Those Who are Down

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” Galatians 6:9 (NIV)

The past 14 months have brought many difficult situations to our lives. Sheltering in place, not having in-person worship for a portion of that time, many lost jobs; these are just some of the unwelcome interruptions we have experienced in our lives over this time. It is easy to feel frustrated and worried, especially over these past months that seemed totally out of our control. Yet, in the midst of all of these uncertainties, I ran across an article that gave me hope and brightened my day.

Detroit is a large city that has experienced many wonderful days. Unfortunately, the city has struggled mightily in recent years, and much of its lack of funding is out of their control. Once supported by the great auto manufacturing companies, changes in the world economy have brought the city of Detroit to the brink of financial bankruptcy. In the midst of the many programs and departments that have suffered, one of those that has suffered the most is the city's parks system. Detroit has over 300 parks which have not been maintained, causing officials to announce they only had the budget to maintain 72 parks.

When people heard about the parks losing their funding, they quickly sprang into action. One such group calls themselves the “Detroit Mower Gang”. A group of men from around town with riding mowers put out a challenge to see who could mow the most miles of grass in city parks. The one who mows the most receives the title of the “Grand Champion of the Motown Mowdown.” The work of these energized men has helped the city of Detroit to continue to maintain all of their city parks. It is a beautiful gift of love to a struggling city.

The truth is, we will never have control over many parts of our lives, and this makes us feel powerless. If you are the kind of person who likes to have a say in how things go, to have some control in your life, these past months have probably caused some level of anxiety. Our lives will always have parts of them that are beyond our control. However, there is always a way to respond that will help to make a positive difference. The Detroit Mower Gang could not have funded the work on all 300 parks in Detroit, but they responded with the good they could do. Their work has made a significant difference. When I read about these good neighbors on their lawnmowers, I was reminded that I cannot do all the good, but I can do good. all of the time, no matter the situation.

Prayer: God of Blessings, I know that if I give of myself to others, it will be given to me, so I pray that I give to others freely. I thank You because I know that a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into my lap. I don't have to chase Your blessings, for You give to Your people liberally without holding back. I pray that I show this same regard when I do good to others, because the same standard that I use will be measured to me in return. In Christ's name. Amen.