

A LITTLE LADY WITH A HEAVY HEART

Some time ago my wife had a couple of doctor appointments in Dothan, Alabama, and after she saw the doctors we went to a restaurant for breakfast. She got in line at the serving counter and I took a seat at one of the tables. I had noticed a little lady behind her but thought nothing of it. When Melba brought the food to the table she asked if I had noticed the lady in line behind her and I told her I had. She said, "Well, I asked her how she was feeling this morning and she replied that she was not having a good day; that she had a very heavy heart. I told her that I was so sorry to hear that and asked her if I could give her a hug. She welcomed the hug and then went on to tell me that one of her sisters had recently died of cancer and that her brother was in the hospital in the last stages of throat cancer. She said she also had another sister who had just been diagnosed with lung cancer and that her husband has been in a nursing home for the last three years with Alzheimer's."

Melba said she hugged the little lady again and told her how sorry she was for the heartaches she was passing through. The lady replied, "If you are a praying person, and I believe you are, please pray for me." Melba replied that she surely would. "I will pray that your burdens may be made lighter so that you will be able to bear them." The lady thanked her and they parted. We didn't see her again but we were both very touched and were left with a deep feeling of love for that little lady and a prayer in our hearts that God would comfort, console and strengthen her.

This experience vividly reminded us again that when we see people out in public we never know, unless they have occasion to tell us, just what a load they may be carrying. As I had casually noted the woman's presence in the line I couldn't have imagined that she was so distressed in her heart. As soon as Melba began telling me of their conversation tears began to well up in my eyes and run down my cheeks, and my heart went out to that dear little Sister with strong feelings of love and sympathy. My own troubles and afflictions seemed so very insignificant at that moment compared to hers and I was glad to know that she understood the source of her help and was not ashamed to ask for the prayers of a total stranger. I have no doubt but that she is one of the Lord's little ones and that He will be to her everything she needs now and will take her home to glory one sweet day.

---Elder Ralph Harris