

Dear W.C.,

You helped my handicapped husband and I with a wheelchair accessible van three years ago. It was such a blessing to us and allowed us to get to many doctors appointments, hospitals, food shopping and family gatherings over the past few years. I really don't know what would have happened to my husband and I if The Time Is Now to Help had not provided this van. We would not have ever been able to afford this van on our fixed income. My husband continues to decline and now can no longer speak. When you visited us last I remember you had a long conversation together, but those days are now behind him. I have had to give up my part-time job and care for him now full-time. For the past month we have not been able to go anywhere due to the wheelchair lift no longer working on the van you gave us. I have to bring my husband with me everywhere I go as he cannot be left alone. I brought the van to the place we had it repaired by you before and they gave me a quote for the repair. It is much too expensive for us to afford. We can barely pay our other expenses much less an expensive van repair. I am so sorry to ask for your help again but is there any way you could help us repair the wheelchair lift on the van so my husband can get to his medical care? His body may be failing him but his mind is still the same as the husband I married twenty-six years ago. He is fully aware of everything happening to him and around him but is no longer able to respond to it. I can see what he is feeling by looking in his eyes and I feel his pain and anguish. Having transportation would help to ease some of that anguish he is feeling every day.

Dear Readers,

I remembered this husband and wife well and I was saddened to hear about his decline. We had talked about his disease in depth at the time of my past visit and they were well aware of what his future entailed. To hear it had progressed to this level already was extremely disheartening.

I went to the address the wife had given in her letter. It was a different address from where I had visited them in the past. At that time they had been living with their adult son in a rental home. Now they were in a first floor apartment not far from where they had lived previously. I knocked on the door and it was answered by the woman I remembered, but I noticed the past three years had taken a toll on her. She looked tired and had aged. The woman looked at me in surprise as I had not called ahead to plan my visit. I wanted to get a true assessment of their needs besides just the van repair. I remembered this husband and wife to be very resistant to any assistance in addition to the wheel chair accessible van. In fact looking through my records before my visit I noticed the only additional assistance they had received in the past was some food and gas for the van. I noticed my notes from my previous visit had

noted some other areas in need but at that time the wife had been working part-time and their adult son was living with them, paying rent and providing extra help.

After her initial shock the woman warmly invited me inside the apartment. I entered a small room that was taken up with medical equipment. The husband was in a supportive wheel chair and when I approached him I saw him smile in recognition. He tried to lift his clenched hand in greeting so I went over and grasped it and said hello. His wife was correct; in his eyes I could see he was truly happy to see me. I spoke to him for a few minutes and asked a few questions he was able to slightly nod his head in answer. I know sometimes people say to me they feel awkward talking to people with such disabilities and obvious handicaps. My answer to them is they are just people like the rest of us but trapped in a body that does not work. I just talk to them like I talk to everyone else and how I would want people to talk to me. I would want people to acknowledge me and not pretend I am not in the room.

The wife kept looking at her husband and seemed to be interpreting his needs. I watched as she gave him a small sip of water and patted his mouth with a towel. She told me how he was losing the ability to swallow so she had to watch him very carefully so he did not aspirate what he ate and drank. I noticed the panicked look on the husbands face and so did his wife. She said, "We made a promise to each other when he was first diagnosed to always be honest with him. He does not want anything kept from him. Isn't that right dear?" I watched as the husbands eyes filled with tears and he nodded in agreement. I then asked the husband, "Do you want us talking in front of you?" I had to know our conversation was not going to cause him any further distress than he was obviously already enduring. He again nodded in agreement.

I asked about the changes that had taken place in their lives over the past three years. They told me their son had gotten married and lived several miles away. With the loss of his help with the rent they had to find something else they could afford. They had applied for housing assistance and utility assistance and were receiving both after a long wait. The wife said, "We both wanted our son to live his life. He is a good man and deserves that. We did not want to have his whole adult life being caring for his father. He now helps us twice a week, giving me a break to go grocery shopping or to my own doctor's appointments. That is the only time I leave my husband's side. The rest of the time our son works and spends time with his wife and their new baby." The wife proudly showed me pictures of their new grandchild. I watched as the husband looked at the pictures too and did see the love and pride in his eyes, just like his wife said I would.

We then went on to talking about the handicap van. I went outside to take a look at the van and noted they had taken very good care of it over the past three years. I made notes of the mileage and also noted the tires were worn and needed to be replaced. When I came back

inside the wife showed me the quote from the repair shop we used for wheelchair lifts and other handicap conversions. It was an expensive fix but would again allow them to use the van for the husband's medical visits and as the wife had mentioned he needed to get out of the house sometimes to lift his spirits. She said, "Sometimes a short drive to our son's house to see the baby gets him through a tough day." How could we deny a fellow creation in such obvious distress the simple pleasure of a safe ride in his wheelchair accessible van?

I excused myself for a minute and called the repair shop to set up the repairs. After speaking to the repair man and also making an additional appointment for a service repair and new tires, I told the husband and wife what I had arranged. The wife immediately burst into tears and then the husband did as well. The wife took the towel she had been using to wipe the husband's mouth and gently wiped away his tears. She said to him, "I knew we should have called The Time Is Now to Help a month ago. I am such a stubborn woman sometimes." The husband smiled and nodded his head in agreement.

I took a brief walk around the small apartment and noted their food and toiletries insecurity. They were living very frugally so they could get by on their fixed income. This time the wife allowed me to provide them with gift cards for food, toiletries, household necessities and gas so she could purchase these items on her next shopping day when her son would stay and care for his father. I asked them if there was any other area of assistance we could help them with. I reminded the husband and wife about all of "You" and how "You" would not want them suffering in silence. The wife said, "No we have everything we need now thanks to The Time Is Now to Help. The only thing I know my husband would like is if you would pray with him again. He told me many times how much that meant to him when you visited us three years ago." She looked at her husband and asked, "Would you like Sal to pray with us again?" The husband's eyes lit up and he again slightly nodded his head in obvious agreement. I grasped one of the husband's clenched hands and the wife held his other as we all joined our hands in prayer. We shared a very moving prayer asking God for his mercy on this man and his wife. We also asked for his strength for the days ahead and thanked God for all of "You" making their assistance possible. We also prayed for the many other people helped by all of "You", removing their pains and suffering of poverty.

When we finished our prayer the wife again wiped her own and her husband's eyes. After a lengthy goodbye I hugged both the husband and the wife. It is the hardest part of my visits when I know our fellow creations are suffering and it is not the kind of suffering we can remove. I have to be encouraged that we are doing everything we can to remove the pains of poverty that we possibly can. That is what keeps me able to go to my next visit, to open the next letter of request, to continue our good works every day.

Thank “You” for supporting our mission and helping us provide this life changing assistance. We will continue to provide this life changing assistance, sharing love and God’s blessings, thanks to all of “You”.

Health & Happiness, Love & God Bless Everyone, W.C./Sal

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Family Foundation, The Gallo Family Fund, Scott & Lisa Stearns, Fox Charities, Martin Business, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuberth, Kathleen & Brian Hurdis, Sibley-Saltinstall Charitable Foundation, Jeffrey Martin, Thomas Getzen, JT Marty, Deborah Riley, Lake Geneva Animal Hospital, Thrivent Choice Program, Mike & Kim Olsen, Gregory Swanson, Karin Collamore, Carl & Arlene Siegel, William & Jean Isaacson, David & Shirley Heigl, Marvin & Audrey Hersko, James & Marilyn Dyer, Jack Mallory, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, John Oregan, Carol Hinnners, Shawn & Donna McLafferty, Charles & Barbara Taylor, Beth & Jody Rendall, Ellen Flanagan, Michael & Kathe Beach, Gerald & Marilyn Wilkin, Shari & James Loback, Albert & Ellen Burnell, Jeannene Smarslik, Teresa Hurley, E. & Barbara Andres, Duane DeYoung, William Davit, our anonymous donors and ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262) 249-7000.

Memorials: The Donald Ketchpaw family in memory of Gerald Ketchpaw. Jody Cook & family in loving memory of her Mother-in-Law Dorothy Mae Cook on Mother's Day.

Prayer Chain: The power of prayer and positive thoughts comes from the true healer, our Lord answering our prayers. Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline, Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma, & Marilyn.

Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop: Please donate your gently used household items and furniture to the Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop. For local pick up of major items or collection appointments please call (262) 275-2264. Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop is located at N2270 State Rd. 67, Walworth, WI 53184. Hours: Monday – Saturday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed Sundays. Please visit often knowing your support will provide life changing assistance for the fellow creations in their care. Inspiration Ministries is home for up to 80 residents that live with multiple physical and mental challenges. I thank all of you for

helping. For more information visit www.inspirationministries.org.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org