

Not How...*But Who*

A dejected-appearing freshman sat across the desk from me. His heart was so cast down that he had no words to speak...He merely pushed across the desk a slip of blue paper, and looked appealingly at me.

I recognized the piece of paper. It was a notice from the college business office that the next payment was due. This young man had not come to ask for financial help from me. He had come in bewilderment of spirit to know what he should do. I knew he was working long hours to meet his expenses, and that he was careful in his expenditures; but the day of reckoning had come.

I noted on the account that he owed \$29.75. It was due that very day. The notice had come five days earlier, but the time had passed without his having received any provision to meet the impending obligation.

I enquired, "In order to understand the problem and to pray more intelligently, would you care to tell me how much you have toward the bill?"

He spoke for the first time, quietly. "Seventy-five cents."

I pushed the blue slip back to him with the request, "Turn the statement over and write down an equation on the other side." Obediently he took out a pencil and on the paper before him he wrote as I dictated: "Seventy-five cents is to \$29.75 as..."

Faithfully he began writing the equation, having no idea how it was going to end.

"Seventy-five cents is to \$29.75 as five loaves and two fishes are to 5,000 men plus women and children." By the time I got to speaking of women and children he had ceased writing. He dropped the pencil on the desk and bowed his head to pray. He asked forgiveness of the Lord for his little faith. He prayed for obedience and holiness of heart that would trust God whatever the circumstances of the moment might be.

After praying with him, I reminded him of the basic principle of faith revealed to us in the Scriptures. Our problem is never to know how prayer is answered, only to be sure that we are acquainted with the *One* Who answers prayer. The how is God's part; to know Him is our part.

Did God take care of him? He did! The student came into my office the next day to tell me with a smile that God had answered our prayer, unexpected money had come, and the installment was paid. He completed his course of study. In the years that followed his graduation, whenever we met at homecoming or at an alumni dinner, he would invariably repeat to me:

"Seventy-five cents is to \$29.75 as five loaves and two fishes are to 5,000 men plus women plus children."

"Always—not how, but *Who*."

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V. Raymond Edman (1900-1967) served for twenty-five years as president of Wheaton College, Illinois. Born in Chicago, he spent five years in Ecuador as missionary to the Quechua Indians. This incident is taken by permission from '*Not Somehow...But triumphantly*,' by Zondervan Publ. House; Grand Rapids.

Submitted By Tom Stephens
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