

HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 12/5/2022

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

ONE AT ONE – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, December 6, you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, it was announced that guns are the number one cause of death for children in America. Pray for the safety of all people and especially children. Ask that we might find commonsense solutions to reduce the number of deaths by guns in our country.*

V. P. Menon was an important figure in India's struggle for freedom from Great Britain after World War II. He worked closely with Lord Mountbatten on the final draft of the charter plan for independence. Unlike many of the leaders in India at the time, Menon had no secondary education and was very-much a self-made man. The eldest of twelve children, he quit school at thirteen to work as a laborer, a coal miner, a factory worker, a merchant, and a schoolteacher. He talked his way into a job as a clerk in the Indian administration. Because of his integrity and skills in working both with Indian and British officials, he was able to quickly rise to a position of prominence in the government.

One of Menon's most notable personal characteristics was his generosity. The real impetus for this trait, in addition to growing up in a poor family, was an incident that happened when Menon first arrived in Delhi to seek a job in government. At the train station, all of his possessions were stolen. Because of this, he would have to return home by foot. In desperation, he turned to an elderly man and asked for a loan of 15 rupees to hold him over until he could get a job. The man gave him the money, but when Menon asked for the man's address so that he could repay him, his benefactor said that, rather than repay him, he owed the debt to any stranger who came to him in need for as long as he lived. The help came from a stranger and was to be repaid to a stranger.

Menon never forgot the gift of trust and financial help. He never forgot the debt. Even the day before he died, when a beggar came to his home asking for help to purchase new sandals because his feet were covered with sores, Menon asked his daughter to take fifteen rupees out of his wallet and give it to the man. It was his last conscious act.

Sometimes today it is referred to as "paying it forward," receiving help with no expectation of repayment, except for helping another in the future. As Christians, we have received a tremendous gift. When JESUS died for our sins, we were given freedom from the obligation to pay for those sins. We have been given a new life even now. But we have also been called to "pay it forward" by letting others know that, in CHRIST, they are also free. Telling other about JESUS and inviting them to come and meet HIM, are ways that we give to others because of what we have received.

In CHRIST'S love,
Pastor Jeffrey