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Feeling lucky? Don't believe it.

I don't know very much about cars. Although my father was an executive at Ford Motor Company who brought home all the newest cars to try them out, I never quite caught the bug. My son amazes me as he keeps up with my friends in conversations about vintage hot rods, prototypes yet to be seen, and the horsepower of the Testarossa gliding by. As he cranes his head to follow it down the boulevard I know what he is thinking, "There goes one lucky person behind that wheel." At the price of a vehicle like that, the driver must have been awful lucky in the market, in business, or have a very rich daddy. Meanwhile I am thinking two different thoughts as that car goes by, "I am lucky to be driving my grandmother's 1998 Escort," and "I am a lucky man to have such a cool son." Perhaps luck is in the eyes of the beholder, as is beauty. **Each day I do not ask for luck, I ask for eyes to see how lucky I already am.**

I know that many would think it quite lucky to have a Rolex, canal frontage house, fishing boat, or chalet in Utah. I feel lucky to have a Casio, Armani sunglasses I found on a park bench, a new margarita making machine, and windstorm insurance. Someone "less lucky" than I might feel very lucky to have a bike to get to their job at McDonalds, a new pair of basketball shoes, and an apartment they share with three other people. Having been to Haiti for mission trips I know that their luck might be three meals of beans and rice instead of two, one travel sized shampoo for their Sunday bath, and a new roof of corrugated steel. **Luck is such a wonderfully relative thing that if you want to, you can feel pretty lucky no matter what your situation.**

Or not, as is often the case. The hardest thing about luck is that most people feel they never get their fair share. They are convinced that someone else is always luckier (or prettier, or smarter, or more popular). And they are frustrated by this perception of inequity. I guess it's the same kind of feeling that I have about the fact that whatever line I get into at the store is surely the one that will stop moving forward. All the times I have been in a line that moves faster are ignored or forgotten in favor of the times my line died once I cursed it by my choice. So it goes with luck. The person obsessed by the others around them who seem to winning more often simply forget the many times and ways they too have been lucky. Counting one's blessings can correct this warped perspective. **Unfortunately, "unlucky people" are often too busy counting up others' blessings to notice their own.**

Now there is no question that some people seem pretty darn lucky. Although it is very unlikely you will win a lottery, someone has to and they will feel pretty lucky until Uncle Sam and Uncle Claude show up for their cut. Some people work very, very hard for their luck, so hard that one could hardly call their success luck. Some people are in the right place at the right time and through no great genius or effort on their part get a lucky break. But even in that case, they took the break instead of letting it pass by. Some are

lucky to be born in just the right family, but the wealth you envy them receiving may come at a higher price than you would want to pay. While we look at a beautiful face, a brilliant mind, or athletic body and cry “lucky,” the truth is that it’s not what you get but what you do with it that really matters. **One man’s luck is often another’s hard work.**

Finally we must ask if people of faith really can believe in luck. It is a fact that some people seem generally luckier than others (i.e. living in S.E. Florida instead of Baghdad right now.) We certainly can believe that God has set up a world where “chance” plays a role: some people are just lucky sometimes and other people are lucky other times. Others may believe in a world where divine providence rules: you are lucky or unlucky because that is the way God wants it to be. I happen to believe in both which confuses me at times and makes things crystal clear at other times. But no matter what you believe, don’t believe in luck itself. Believe in celebrating the good fortune of others, giving thanks for the lucky breaks you’ve received, and do whatever you can to make life better for anyone not quite so blessed. **Don’t believe in luck, the odds are not in your favor.**