

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

"Let no man despise thy youth"—I. Timothy 4-12

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### WHAT IS GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS?

By Wilbur H. Mullen

Were we to travel the world over in search of the proper definition of the word "neighbor," we would doubtless return home with as many different definitions as the number of authorities to which we referred. Dictionaries give us the derivation and connotation of "neighbor," but definitions are cold and inadequate to explain the real heart of "neighborliness." Where shall we look? Do nations manifest true neighborly qualities? . . . No! . . . Are we able to deduce from the actions of individuals its true essence? . . . To some extent, but insufficient for definition. Where then shall we turn? Ah, we shall appeal to the highest authority, Jesus Christ, and discover from his narrative of the requisites for good neighborliness. We note the following from the Samaritan's actions:

#### I. He saw the need of the man.

The true neighbor is one who sees the adversity of his fellow man, and is willing to do something about it. The Samaritan traveler on the Jericho-Jerusalem road beheld by the wayside a man who had been robbed and left desolate. The Samaritan could have passed on even as the priest and Levite had done, but instead he prepared to minister to this man who was less fortunate than himself. Doubtless, the helpless man and the traveler were of different nationalities, but neighborliness is not subject to race or creed. Here was a human being in distress. He had no friends, no one to comfort him, no one to ease his pain, and in that condition he would have died. But the Samaritan, possessed with a noble spirit, could not turn his head from the plight of the needy. Despite a difference of race, despite the lowly state of the helpless man, the Samaritan looked upon him and recognized that he needed assistance. It was in his power to alleviate the man's sufferings, and how could he withhold his compassion?

#### II. He had compassion on the man.

Rarely does compassion spring from a mere intellectual recognition of need. A personal, vital concern for our fellow man is the basic principle of neighborliness. The feeling of sorrow which the Samaritan possessed was the chief mark of difference between him and the Levite and the priest. It might have been possible that the Levite would minister to the helpless man, but we feel that his aid would have been rendered reluctantly, and motivated only by his desire to keep in favor with the public. Such service would have been exceedingly hypocritical, emanating from a heart that was intent on furthering its own cause. Many modern philanthropists are stimulated to charitable action because of the presence of public opinion. Their giving is not the manifestation of a heart of love, but is rather their mere outward bid and price for secular influence. Without compassion, social service is meaningless, superficial and unsuccessful. Compassion is the fountain and ever-living source of all real acts of mercy. Compassion stimulates. Compassion cannot remain locked in the bosom. It must flow out. It must act!

#### III. He went to the man.

We see the test of the Samaritan's compassion when he went to the wounded man's assistance. All other things were now of secondary importance. His business engagements would have to wait. He might lose trade thereby, and even endanger his present mission—but what is gold compared with life? Gold will vanish and decay, but a good deed will live eternally. Gold is the symbol of lust; heart service the symbol of love. An act of kindness cannot be measured in terms of worldly value; its worth is beyond human estimation, and is evaluated by the Ruler of the universe who judgeth every good and every evil deed. In the heart of the Samaritan there was the conviction, "I must!" He left his own beast by the wayside and did not hesitate to go to the helpless man's assistance. He was doing it at a sacrifice, but sacrifice is the price of service.

#### IV. His service cost him something.

He who keeps has nothing, but he who gives possesses much. We do not know the creed of the Samaritan, nor his particular philosophy of life, but in his giving to the dying man, his act was made alive and full of meaning. It is true he poured oil in the man's wounds and gave him physical comfort, but in that simple humanitarian act the scene does not reach its climax. Most any man will pull a sheep out of the mire, or bathe a dog's wounded leg, but such acts are the results of no special virtue, and provoke no comment. An act of kindness increases in depth and vividness in proportion to its cost. Many "would be" helpers sever their giving at the point where it begins to actually cost them something. Oil in the man's wounds was not sufficient to bring the Samaritan's compassion to its fruition. What he had done so far affected his purse only negatively in loss of time, and probable business contact; but next we see him take from his own purse enough money to care for the man at an inn. His giving was now positive, and was indeed a direct sacrifice. If, even now, there were any doubts as to the man's sincerity, they lose themselves in that magnanimous spirit of trust and sacrifice evidenced by his declaration, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Does not such an implicit trust in both the wounded man and the innkeeper portray a depth of sincerity and love that springs from the very bottom of the soul? The Samaritan went to the limit in doing all that a good neighbor could have done. HE WAS A GOOD NEIGHBOR.

Thus we see that good neighborliness is not a mere, negative indifference to society; it is not a simple arbitrary classification of those who might not commit an overt indiscretion by which his fellow man would suffer. Good neighborliness implies good deeds, social co-operation, willingness to help. It has positive qualities. The Samaritan fully exemplified its positive aspects. His own troubles were secondary to the needs of others; self-interest was lost in compassion; personal gain gave way to service; and in sacrifice his whole act reached a worthy and noble consummation.

Delfkom P. O., So. Africa

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Dear Homeland Friends:

As it nears the Christmas season my thoughts naturally turn to home and loved ones, and we also remember our many dear friends and our visit among you all last year. We cannot write to each one but we think of and pray for all and hope that the Christmas season will be a happy one and that the New Year will be a time when we all shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ our Saviour.

This has been our weekly class day. Quite a number have attended and the services were good. God's presence was with us for which we praise Him.

Once in awhile we have the children sing a special song in our Thursday afternoon services. One day they sang very beautifully in English, "Nearer my God to Thee," and another day, "Ye Must be Born Again." These people are blessed with very fine voices and the children sing very well indeed. I was much blessed as I listened.

In Sunday school the children enjoy singing "Jesus Loves Me." First they sing it in Zulu and then a verse in English. For some months I had the S. S. in the house but since our numbers have increased we now go to the church. The children enjoy the nice accordion that the Sandford Young People gave me last Christmas. Last Sunday I asked if they were tired of it but they quickly answered: "No, no! We like it very much."

I have been encouraging them to learn Bible verses and at present we are learning the 23rd Psalm. Ten or more know it now and others want to know it by Christmas. I made quite a number of nice Bible picture books from Scripture calendars that were sent out and I have promised one to each child who can repeat the psalm by memory. I remember how pleased I used to be to get a prize in Sunday school for learning Bible verses when I was a little girl.

The rainy season has started and now it is not so easy to get around. Our roads here are not too good at their best and the rains make them very bad indeed. Last week we had a four days' rain and it started with the worst electric storm that I have ever seen. It struck a near-by kraal and burned a hut. Fortunately no one was hurt but some food was burned.

Our day school closes the first of December for a month's vacation. Our new teacher seems to be a very nice girl. She had never heard holiness preached before and she has become interested and is asking about it. May the dear Lord help us to be a help to her! When she first came to us she intended to go to training college after Christmas, but now she has told me that she likes it here and will stay if we wish her to. I do pray that this dear girl will walk closely with the Lord and continue to be a help to the children under her care also.

In closing, our little boys wish to send Best Christmas and New Year wishes to all the dear homeland children. May God richly bless you all in the New Year is our prayer.

Yours in His service,

GLADYS M. KEIRSTEAD