

Somebody's Looking

Dee Bowman

One evening a few years back, I went to a local drive-in to buy hamburgers for Norma, her Mother and me. I noticed the young car-hops as they skittered about in their short shorts. Suddenly one young lady caught my eye. She had on nice-fitting, modest, long pants. I looked again. It was one of our young ladies from Southside. She brought my order, not knowing it was me. She was surprised to see me, but for a good reason, not one of embarrassment. I made a larger than normal tip. As I drove away, I thanked God for young people who are willing to run the risk of being different in order to serve Him.

That got me to thinking about a pure life. It seems to me that it:

Takes many forms, none better than when nobody's watching. A man's heart is always in God's purview. There is no such thing as a secret thought. He sees it all—our attitudes, our dispositions, our real intentions. He is aware of our ambitions, our real motives. He knows if our actions are the result of sincere thinking, or if we are merely going through the motions. And just because no one sees our evil thoughts doesn't mean they cease to exist. But never is He more pleased than to note that, even though no one sees it, our thoughts are pure, free from rancor and doubt. Furthermore, if our life is pure when no one is watching, it will be pure when they are. So at both ends of that spectrum, both in your contemplations and actions, God is glorified. And that, whether anyone knows it or not.

Read Psalm 15:1-2.

Encourages every person—young or old—who comes in contact with it. A pure life is an exemplary life—one that brings favorable reactions no matter where or how it is observed. A pure life has good reason to exist simply because it flavors every event, brings joy to every occasion, reinforces every good project. And how amazing that it does all that without fanfare or personal elevation. Pure lives, when possessed by older folks, are like a magnet to younger people; they are fascinated by strength of character, by faith displayed by those who have not only lived life for a long time, but have done it with courage and discipline. And how wonderful to see a young person who, early in life and at some risk to his popularity, has dedicated himself to truth and holiness. It is a sure testimony to what a pure life can do. Young or old, a pure life is an encouraging life.

Read Matthew 5:16.

Teaches in small, simple ways—even when you don't know it. Some of the best lessons ever learned didn't come from the schoolroom or the book shelf, but from someone's wise handling of a difficult circumstance, someone's good reactions to what would

otherwise have been a volatile situation, or maybe some person's encouragement for someone who didn't even deserve it. These lessons were not instigated for instruction; they were just someone living a pure life. But how powerful their teaching! How wonderful their instruction! How clever their motivational speech!

Read Proverbs 24:3.

Makes those who teach—parents, teachers, elders, preachers—proud to know you. The person who is possessed of a pure heart, one which results in a pure life, doesn't go about seeking praise or adulation for it, but it inevitably results in his being admired nonetheless. Aren't you glad to know someone who has excellence of character and unashamedly serves God? And people who teach, whether at home, at the office, in the school room, or in the field, cannot but take notice of those who seek to excel. A good example is not built on deciding to be a good example, but by doing what is right and honorable; the result comes naturally. Good influence brings rewards, whether they are sought or not.

Read II Timothy 4:15.

It's good to develop and maintain a pure life. It's the only life that makes any sense at all, for it's the only one that relates to and embraces eternity. And it all begins with simple personal integrity, an honest effort to do right.