

Kindness

Kindness, as Mother Teresa so beautifully said, is the only language that we all understand. We've all heard the saying, "What goes around comes around.", and the following true story is a wonderful reminder of how simple acts of kindness can come back to us when we least expect it.

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life." "No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family home.

"Is that your son?" The nobleman asked.

"Yes", the farmer replied proudly.

I'll make you a deal. Let me provide him with the level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of." And that he did. Farmer Fleming's son attended the very best schools and, in time, graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the same nobleman's son, who was saved from the bog, was stricken with pneumonia.

What saved his life this time? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any human being, let me do it now...for I shall not pass this way again. --William Penn

Wouldn't it have been better if the young boy hadn't experienced the misfortune of falling into the bog in the first place?

Don't you think his parents probably told him not to go near the bogs?

How terrible it must have been to be bogged down in muck unable to free yourself and crying out in desperation for someone to save you!

If the boy hadn't fallen into the bog, the farmer wouldn't have burdened with a rescue mission in the middle of an already busy and exhausting day.

What if the farmer had just ignored the boy's cries for help as youthful foolishness and gone about the rigors of the day as planned?

What caused the farmer instead to be moved with compassion and kindness to search for the boy and rescue him?

What if the boy's father had not been so moved by the farmer's kindness that he responded with such gratitude as to seek out the farmer to reward him?

What if the farmer had accepted the offer of cash for his act of kindness? The cash was most probably very needed!

The farmer didn't save the boy because of the possibility of a reward. (He will surely be rewarded for his kindness and compassion in the life to come)

He did it because it was the right thing to do. Doing the right thing is its own reward.

Had the nobleman not persisted in seeking other ways to bless the farmer he would not have thought about blessing the farmer's son.

How often do we run into resistance when we try to do something worthwhile and then give up?

The nobleman's son saw determination in his father and learned the value of persistence and determination.

How important was that life lesson for Sir Winston Churchill?

Finally, what about the farmer's son?

He saw his father model for him what it is to be a man who does the right thing because it is the right thing to do,

The farmer turned down payment for himself which resulted in the nobleman offering to pay for his son's education.

The son must have been proud of his father and grateful for the opportunity of an education.

He must have worked diligently and purposefully to have accomplished what he did.

The best way that he could say thank you to the nobleman and to his father is by making the most of the opportunity that his education could provide.

How many times do we have opportunities and blow them by not giving them our very best effort.

Life is not about status quo.

Life is full of trials and tribulations.

Don't curse them.

Look at them as opportunities for turning defeat into victory and kindness into Penicillin.

God has a perfect plan for our lives.

We will find it when we seek him with all of our hearts.

Both of the fathers did the right thing.

Both of their son's lives were changed by it.

The whole world has been touched by the fruit of what could have been a tragedy.

God bless.