

Greeting to all the wonderful people at Manatee Life,

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 6:31 (MSG) – Larger reading: Luke 6:27-36

"Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them!"

STORY:

When General Robert E. Lee found an officer under his command gazing with satisfaction in the mirror, the general said, "Sir, you must be the happiest man in the world." "Why," questioned the officer. "Because," said Lee, "you are in love with yourself, and you haven't a rival in the whole world."

OBSERVATION:

"Grab the initiative" ... be a self-starter ... take hold of the reins ... are but some of the motivational phrases used in today's world. I've been to the Tony Robbins' motivational seminars. There is one message from all the speakers. *"You can do it. There is nothing holding you back. Just take the initiative because no one else will do it for you. You will be successful."* It has made Mr. Robbins a multimillionaire. People are hungry to be successful. We want what we want.

What Mr. Robbins doesn't understand is that what we want above all else is not success and power and riches. No it is to matter. It is to make a difference. It is to love and be loved. Everything else pales next to that.

While being a pastor in Gainesville, Florida it fell to my lot to hold the funerals in the same year of the two wealthiest gentlemen in the entire county. Their incredible wealth didn't bring them happiness nor did the positions of influence and authority. They both had beautiful homes with more than one servant. It was the desire to love and be loved.

I sat with the families and heard them speak of their father and daddy. One family shared how their father had shaped the city of Gainesville. They shared what he had accomplished, the power he had possessed, the influence he held over others ... but nothing about love ... and his family showed it. The other family sat around the large family room and laughed about how much their daddy tried to give his money away not to bring honor or fame to him, but simply because there were people in need.

One gentleman was about influence, the other was about doing for others. They both died with great wealth, but one died alone, the other surrounded by friends and family. One treated people as pawns on the chessboard of life – a pathway to success. The other treated people as he wanted to be treated – with love and respect and in the process discovered success. The first gentleman started out with wealth, the other started out in rural Florida delivering turpentine for 25 cents a run. One's pathway was easy, the other very hard. One learned how to step on others as he climbed the ladder of success, the other learned to stop and help others on the way up that same ladder.

If you met these gentlemen at the local store you would have known instantly that the first gentleman was successful, but you would have thought the second gentleman was the janitor. One was in love with himself, but the other was in love with the people of the world. One was constantly demanding things be done for him, but the other was always looking for what he could do for others.

One was happy, but the other ... not so much. Each day we determine which path we are going to travel ... what initiative we are going to take ... what we desire to be the outcome of our behavior ... what influence we will have on others ... it is our choice.

QUOTE:

“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.”

– Charles Dickens

PRAYER:

We want to be loved so help us to love. We want to make a difference so help us to place ourselves on the line for others. We want to be remembered so help us to be memorable. Put us to doing. Put us to being. Put us to accomplishing. Put us to serving. Put us to work, Lord, put us to work!

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim

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The time changes this weekend ... I want you to be on time for worship at 10:30. And if you can't make it remember that you can watch in on Facebook starting around 1:00 pm.

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