



Monday Matters

February 25, 2013

Stop! Look! and Listen!

I remember those early days of my life when I was able to cruise the neighborhood on my bike. I was taught that if I came to the railroad tracks that I was to **stop, look and listen** for any train that might be coming. As I grew older I learned to drive a car. Again I was instructed that if I was crossing any railroad tracks, especially without a gate, I was to **stop, look and listen** to make certain no train was approaching.



A number of years ago an experiment was performed at Princeton Theological Seminary about Good Samaritans. It was designed to find a link between personality traits and the likelihood of helping others in an emergency. The parable of the Good Samaritan raises questions such as: What possessed the priest and the Levite to pass by the injured man on the side of the road. Possibly they were in a hurry and were filled with busy, important

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"Good Samaritan"
MonaghanMusic

Quote of the Week

"The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But... the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"

thoughts. Maybe the Samaritan was in less of a hurry. The experiment was to help evaluate a hypothesis that people who are religious in a Samaritan fashion will be more likely to help than those of a priest or Levite fashion.

Students were broken into groups and were told that they would be heading to another building to perform a certain task and the urgency to get there was varied for the groups. One task was to prepare a talk about seminary jobs and the other about the story of the Good Samaritan. In one condition they were told they were late for their next task and in the other they were told they had a few minutes but should head on over anyway.

In the alleyway between the two buildings they passed a man slumped over in a doorway, who moaned and coughed as the students passed by.

The results were quite interesting. The students that were told they were late for their next task had a major effect on their helping behavior. However, the task assigned to them to perform once they arrived at their destination did not have any significant effect (even when the talk was about the Good Samaritan).

Overall, 40% offered some help to the victim. 63% that were not in a big rush helped and 10% who were extremely rushed helped. There again was no significant result based on the message the student was to perform once at the other building.

A conclusion from this experiment ironically showed that a person in a hurry is less likely to help people, even if he/she is going to speak on the parable of the Good Samaritan. It was also noted that some people literally stepped over the victim on their way to the other building.

Sometimes we become hurried. We are in a rush to get from point A to point B that we don't see the opportunities that God has placed before us. We are so engrossed in our own thoughts and ideas that we don't stop to take a breath, we don't look at what opportunities that God has put before us, and we don't listen to what God wants us to do. This week why don't we just **STOP, LOOK and LISTEN**. Find out what God has for us to do.

by Ron Nelson

~Martin Luther King, Jr.~

The Nelson Family



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