

The Paperboy

In this short article, I'm going to tell you a story which illustrates a Biblical principle which can change our own lives for the better as well as those of others we meet with on a day-to-day basis.

A shaft of sunlight streamed through the bedroom window and warmed the face of Mr. Smith. He was a happy man, and all was well with his world.

He had a loving wife, two healthy and happy children, a comfortable home and a job that he enjoyed and had great prospects.

He got up, showered, shaved, dressed, breakfasted and gave his wife and children a hug and a kiss goodbye and left for work.

He strode down the road, whistling, as he had always done. BUT, on arrival at the office things had changed.

He snapped a "*good morning*" to his smiling secretary, and the office boy came near to getting a cuff behind the ear from him!

Why this sudden change?

By coffee time, happy relationships had been re-established, but why this bad beginning to the working day?

Something had happened between home and office that had caused this change in Mr. Smith, but he could not think what.

He couldn't blame British Rail, as he had had a smooth, uncrowded journey.

The next morning, Mr. Smith set out from home with the nose of a bloodhound to solve this mystery.

Again, it was a beautiful morning, and the walk to the station was most enjoyable. He handed his morning paper money to the boy selling papers outside the Station and proffered a cheery "*good morning.*"

With a grumpy look on his face, the paperboy thrust the paper at him and grunted.

By the time Mr. Smith had sat in the carriage, his cheery disposition had vaporised – and he hadn't even opened his paper yet!

The answer flashed into his mind ... the paperboy!

This boy's glum face and grumpy attitude had rubbed off on Mr. Smith, and it had been influencing him every morning.

He was allowing this slip of a boy to influence him without realising it.

He decided that he would try to find out something about the boy from the ticket collector that night.

The next morning, Mr. Smith began his campaign.

He called the paperboy by name, and showed genuine interest in his welfare.

The reply was still a grunt, but a rather surprised one.

Within a few days Mr. Smith actually got a smile from the boy, albeit a rather cracked smile at first, but a smile.

Within a few weeks a friendship had grown up and the other customers of the paperboy were also receiving a smile from him each morning.

Mr. Smith wondered just how many other people in the past had been affected by this glum paperboy.

Mr. Smith may not have known it, but what had happened to him was Biblical ...

Proverbs 27:19 [NIV] *“As water reflects a face, so a man’s heart reflects the man.”*

As we are able to control our own reflection in water, so we can also affect the attitudes of others.

Matthew 5:14 [NIV] *“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

We are the light to this world. We can bring a little bit of the Family of God to this earth every day in our interaction with all we meet.

We can all recognise “*grunting paperboys*” in our own home area.

We as God’s people, are challenged to apply **Proverbs 27:19**.

So that our joyful attitude of life causes joy to be reflected in the lives of those around us.