

JULIE'S STORY-GLIMPSES OF GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Cindy

THE TRAFFIC COP

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Romans 12:17-19
 Philippians 2:3-4
 Luke 6:31

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,
 Show me when I have hurt
 someone else by my insensitivity
 or selfishness. Help me to be
 aware of the hurts of others
 around me. Give me Your
 compassion.
 In Jesus' Name,
 Amen.



CINDY, MY ENEMY

I remember the day the world ceased to be Utopia. I thought as long as I was kind and courteous to others, they would be nice to me. That Utopian dream world crashed down around my little ears when I was eight. Cindy Bell hated me to the core. Looking back, Cindy probably saw me as a snot-nosed, smart-mouthed teacher's pet. However, in my juvenile brain, I was the soul of grace and charity. Cindy was the hall monitor. She wrote "traffic tickets" to speedy students who ran in the hallways between classes. Now that I look back, why would anyone run to go to class? But when Ms. Bell was around, I crept, I strolled, I loitered. I did *anything* but run. Yet I still received the dreaded ticket that entitled me to a leisurely afternoon of detention hall. Why would she treat me this way? I spoke peace to Cindy Bell, but she declared war.

Suddenly, I had an epiphany. God took me on a trip down memory lane. Perhaps her thinly-disguised contempt was justified. Last Friday I told her that the red gingham skirt she wore didn't make her look nearly as fat as the blue pin-striped one. It might have been the gloating grin I flashed at her when I scored three points higher on our social studies test. Could it possibly have been because I cut in front of her in the lunch line and nabbed the last strawberry ice cream square?

I dunno. I can't be sure...

Cindy's dog Waldo had been flattened by a bread truck last Thursday and nobody consoled her. Her mom didn't have enough cash to send Cindy on the class field trip, but none of us chipped in to help. When she ate lunch at a table by herself, we snickered and pointed because her hair was dirty.

Yep, Cindy had her reasons for being peeved at me. I think I deserved my hall citation: for pride, insensitivity, and just plain meanness. Next time, I'll bring an extra cupcake for the hall monitor and try to be a better citizen.

Many times since those Cindy days, I have reflected on the ways I treated her. Cindy was *God's* traffic cop. She was God's agent to slow me down to take a long look at myself. I was haughty and arrogant, a catty classmate. My attitudes of superiority offended her and my lack of humility hurt her deeply. If I had listened to God instead of pouting, I would have heard God's whisper and He could have issued me a warning ticket. Years later I understood the importance of seeing others as God sees them. A little humility and gentleness go a long way.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Philippians 2:3-4

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Romans 12:17-19

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Luke 6:31

- Have you ever had a “Cindy” in your life? No one is angry without first being hurt. Is it possible that you have hurt him/her? Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of any possible offenses that may have caused hostility in the relationship.

- As you go through your week, try to impart value to those who cross your path. Greet them sincerely. Listen when they talk. Encourage them by acknowledging their gifts and character qualities. Thank them for their contributions to your life. List some people here to whom you would like to minister care.

- Have you ever felt like retaliating when someone was hostile or unkind? What does Paul teach in Romans 12 about difficult people? Can you always have a close relationship with someone?

- How would you like to be treated today? Take the opportunity to use Jesus' model in Luke 6 to proactively treat someone as you wish to be treated.