Give Me Patience

(by Mark Mosely)

He should have known it was going to be one of those days when he got out of bed that Friday morning. It had been a long week and a short night. He had overslept that morning and was in a rush to get out the door and on to work. He liked to read the paper and eat breakfast at home in the morning. Those few moments of solitude and peace were precious to him. It was his time to take a "deep breath" before the start of a hectic day. Not today.

He stopped at McDonald's for coffee and a McMuffin. He thought about stopping at the drive-thru window, but the line was too long. Instead, he opted to go inside and take just a few moments to get his thoughts together. All he wanted was a few moments of peace. Not today.

Instead, he was being held hostage by three small terrorists. He guessed their ages to be about 3, 5, and 7. The word "hellions" came to mind. They were out of control - yelling, wrestling, running - doing all the things kids do when parents permit it. In this case, it was a dad who seemed oblivious to the misery being exacted on all the other patrons by his children.

Would this dad do anything to manage his kid's behavior? Apparently, not today. He could excuse the children's behavior. After all, they were only doing what kids do when parents exercise no oversight or concern. The dad? His lack of consideration for others was more than the man could stand. It was the last straw. Another week, another day he might have ignored the whole scene. Not today.

Calmly he walked over to the dad and inquired, *"Sir, are these your children?"* The man looked up. *"Yes."* Eureka! He could see and hear after all! He continued, *"Well, you should be ashamed of yourself. These children are out of control. They have made every person here miserable. And I've watched you absolutely ignore their behavior. I hate to think about what they will be like when they grow up."*

The dad looked toward the ground. *"Sir, you are right. I apologize and take full responsibility for my children's actions. I am their father. I am worried about their future too. Last night their mother died and I've been sitting here trying to figure out how to tell them."*

***"For God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart"*** (**1 Samuel 16:7**). Today's prayer: *"Father, forgive me when I am quick to judge. Give me patience and a kind disposition. Let me remember that my judgment is limited by what I see and know while You see and know all things."*

STEADFAST

(by David Maxson)

***“Therefore, my beloved brother, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain”*** (**1 Corinthians 15:58**).

In baseball, everyone loves the home run. Nothing gets the crowd excited like a long, towering shot over the fence. It scores runs immediately. It is instant gratification. But it's not always the best way to score runs. Sometimes it is better to play "small ball" where you choke up on the bat and cut down on your swing to get on base; where you take a lot of pitches to draw a walk; where you get base runners into scoring position by bunting, hitting to the right side of the diamond, etc. Guys who try to hit home runs tend to strike out. In some situations, you don't want a guy who is swinging for the fences. If he connects with a big swing he's a hero, but more often than not he goes down on strikes or hits a towering fly out to end the inning.

In evangelism, it's easy to fall in love with the home run. Peter preached one sermon and 3000 were baptized (**Acts 2:41**). Impressive. Churches try to match this kind of success by planning big events to attract the masses. We want to hit a big one out of the park. Yet success most often comes from doing the little things; simple things like offering our service to others, listening to those discouraged by life, praying for the lost, slipping God's name into conversation, telling about things you've learned in personal Bible study, standing up when truth is challenged, etc. Doing those kinds of things consistently over time slowly opens doors for us to share our faith with others, and when a big event comes along, those who have been doing these kinds of things all along have the best chance of getting people to come and listen.

Lord God, open doors for the word for us today. Help us to recognize the little things we can do to plant seeds each day.