

PRACTICAL TIPS

By Marjorie F. Eddington

We can be a true friend to ourselves. We can fulfill the second greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt 22:39). How do we do that?

- We rid ourselves of biased, egotistical, prideful beliefs that actually hurt us more than they hurt others.
- We treat ourselves well. We don't wrongly criticize, condemn, justify, or hurt ourselves. That does not mean that we don't acknowledge our weaknesses and work to improve them. But it means that we deal compassionately with ourselves, that we are gentle with ourselves -- as gentle as the Samaritan was with the wounded man binding up his wounds. We can bind up any of our own wounds.

We can be true friends to others. A true friend is one who:

- treats others -- everyone -- with kindness;
- meets the needs of others with compassion.

We can be more like the Samaritan.

- The Samaritan disregarded the race or religion of the wounded man. We can wipe away prejudicial barriers. This includes reaching out and being friendly to people who are not in our little group or "clique." We may find wonderful friendships we may have otherwise missed.
- We can keep our eyes open to see who around us needs help. It may be physical, emotional, social, or academic help that is needed. People are crying out for help in so many different ways. Our smile, our hello, our compassion may give someone a reason to live. We may never know what people are struggling with or thinking.
- We can be kind to someone who has treated us poorly. We can start the healing process because, as Jesus said, "If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that" (**The Message** Matt. 5:46).

And, continuing from last month, we can see God as our Best Friend. Getting our relationship right with God will bless all of our other relationships. Let's be the friend we want to have. Let's be "Good Samaritans."