

Loving Others First

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | December 7, 2007



My wife came home today exasperated. She couldn't wait to tell me what she had just witnessed. She had just finished grocery shopping and, as she walked to her car, she noticed the parking lot filled with cars, which explained the pickup truck following slowly behind her.

As she reached her car, the truck pulled off to the side, graciously allowing other traffic to pass by while they waited for this coveted spot near the front. The two gentlemen patiently waited while my wife unloaded the groceries from the buggy and loaded them into her trunk and dutifully walked her cart to the cart collection point. But as my wife was backing out, she spotted a van pulling around the pickup truck so she waited for the van to pass, but it had stopped and just sat there. So my wife finished backing out and then pulled away and, as she did, she looked into her rear view mirror and saw the van quickly cut off the pickup truck and pull into her just-vacated spot. The two gentlemen looked at each other bewildered and just shook their heads.

As she told me this story I saw so clearly demonstrated those two antagonistic principles which are battling it out on this planet, those two principles warring for your heart and mine - the principle of love versus the principle of selfishness. Everyday we are confronted by life and, with each choice we make, we reveal whose methods we prefer, whose principles we value, whose subject we are and on which side of this cosmic war we will ultimately be found. Do we reflexively allow the "me first" infection of

selfishness to govern our choices, or through God's grace do we consider others first and seek the good, welfare and beneficence of others before our own? As I considered all of this, I remembered Paul's words in Philippians 2:3-8:

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.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death- even death on a cross!

We are all sick of heart and infected with the "me first" survival-of-the-fittest instinct, but praise God we are not doomed to die in our own selfishness. Through Christ Jesus we can have a new attitude, new motives, and new principles infused into our hearts and minds and become the living representatives of Jesus, living out His love for all to see. This Christmas season choose others first - choose to give - choose to love as Christ has loved you!