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UA3/3 The Six Cardinal Mistakes of Man Dealing With Men

Kelly Thompson
Western Kentucky University

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November 2, 1961

KT
Adm

Miss Lena B. McDaniel
517 Durham Street
Greensburg, Kentucky

Dear Miss McDaniel:

You are indeed a kind person.

I deeply appreciate the copy of the
talk which I made in your fine town.

With every good and kind wish, I
am

Sincerely yours,

Kelly Thompson
President

KT/gb

October 18, 1961

Miss Lena B. McDaniel
517 Durham Street
Greensburg, Kentucky

Dear Miss McDaniel:

It is indeed a pleasure for me to send you copies of "Am I a Builder?", the prayer of wisdom, and the 1902 editorial on education. I regret very much that I cannot send you a copy of the address, as I was speaking from notes.

You could, however, do me a wonderful favor by sending me a copy of whatever you were able to take down. If, after you have put it together, you could spare a copy, I would deeply appreciate it.

It was a genuine pleasure to be with you and all the fine people who were there. You have a wonderful community.

Sincerely yours,

Kelly Thompson
President

KI/gb

Encls.

10/25/61

Thank you for the copies as mentioned above and attached is a copy of the address transcribed from my shorthand notes, and I am glad to send it to you.
Lena B. McDaniel

October 10, 1961
Greensburg, Kentucky

* * * * *

I have chosen as a subject of my talk, and what I am attempting to do is think outloud for awhile on, The Six Cardinal Mistakes of Man Dealing With Men. I suggest that if you or I can start tonight mastering some of them we would have gained more than I could describe to you if I talked about them to you from now until midnight. The first one of the cardinal mistakes you or I can make in dealing with people is this:

(1) The delusion that individual advancement is made by crushing others. That is a cardinal mistake of any human being in the world. History books are filled with stories of individuals, countries and even nations, that have been recorded on the sheets of time, and wrecked under the delusion that the way to get ahead was on the back of someone else, or knocking down the other person.

(2) A cardinal mistake of man is the tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected. Certainly now manufacturers make more sedatives and tranquilizers. More demand is being made by you and by me because we worry about things we cannot do anything about. There are too many things we can change to worry about that which cannot be changed. If I may, let me resort to an old prayer:

"Oh Lord, help me to have the courage to change things which should be changed.
Oh Lord, help me to have the serenity to live with the things that cannot be changed.
And, Oh Lord, help me to have the wisdom to distinguish between the two."

(3) The third cardinal mistake is of trying to live with and deal with men by insisting a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it. It is a first-class alibi. It is to ease our own conscience or mind. The Good Lord was kind in giving us a good distribution of friends. Most will not call upon friends when we are in need. It is silly to think a thing is impossible to accomplish because we cannot do it; complaining, nagging, belittling etc. are but props to this mistake, and by nagging and

complaining we may make ourselves feel better. I heard a fellow say this:

"Always weigh the words you say to keep them soft and sweet,
For you don't know from day to day which ones you will have to eat."

How many in this community, and my guess is few; but you have your share,
how many people say a thing can't be done, we tried it ten years ago, but I hope you
find cooperation and go ahead. I would like to quote Am I A Builder:

"I watched them tearing a building down
A gang of men in a busy town.
With a ho-heave-ho and a lusty yell
They swung a beam, and the sidewall fell.

I asked a foreman, "Are these men skilled,
And the men you'd hire if you had to build?"
He gave a laugh and said: "No indeed;
Just common labor is all I need:

I can easily wreck in a day or two
What builders have taken a year to do."
And I thought to myself as I went my way,
Which of these roles have I tried to play?

Am I a builder who works with care,
Measuring life by the rule and square?
Am I shaping my deeds to a well-made plan,
Patiently doing the best I can,
Or am I a wrecker, who walks the town,
Content with the labor of tearing down?"

(4) The fourth cardinal mistake is refusing to set aside trivial preferences or pettiness. Husbands and wives this is a dandy. Employers, companies, workers, neighbors, merchants, bankers, everything will improve if we set aside trivial preferences. They often don't amount to a hill of beans and they separate people in a community. They can break up homes, friendships, and even communities. We might adopt instead the greatest of all medicines for the curing of ISMS AND CHYSMS and all other types of divisions. I would like to quote to you, or for you, a little verse: "Tell Him Now":

"If with pleasure you view any work a man is doing,
If you like him or love him, tell him now;
Don't withhold your approbation till the parson makes oration
And he lies with snowy lilies on his brow;
No matter how you shout it he won't really care about it;
He won't know how many teardrops you have shed;
If you think some praise is due him now's the time to slip it to him,
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead.

More than fame and more than money is the comment kind and sunny
And the hearty, warm approval of a friend.
For it gives life a savor, and it makes you stronger, braver,
And it gives you heart spirit to the end;
If he earns your praise —bestow it; if you like him let him know it;
Let the words of true encouragement be said;
Do not wait till life is over and he's underneath the clover,
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead."

(Do it now by Berton Braley)

(5) Number five is the neglecting of the development of the mind and the continued study of assimilated knowledge as long as it is true. It is taken for granted in our country that when a person gets through school he is educated. Lots of people take that for granted and when they reach that point they just forget all about it. There is no excuse for ignorance now; there might have been once, but not now. The provisions for education are available; there are books, magazines, T-V, newspapers, radio. I am sure we have but to reach out to avail ourselves of the knowledge that is there. Literacy is now optional in Kentucky today. Searching for a salty size-up of the sad state of book learning today, we stumbled across the following editorial lament:

"When we were boys, boys had to do a little work in school. They were not coaxed; they were hammered. Spelling, writing, and arithmetic were not electives; and you had to learn.

"In these more fortunate time, elementary education has become in many places a sort of vaudeville show. The child must be kept amused and learns what he pleases. Many sage teachers scorn the old-fashioned rudiments, and it seems to be regarded as between misfortune and a crime for a child to read * - - -."

A current complaint? Not at all. It is taken from a New York Sun Editorial dated 1902. Like Will Rogers said, "Things ain't what they used to be and probably never wuz."

(6) And the sixth cardinal mistake is attempting to compel others to believe and live as we do. Of the six mistakes I have listed this one is wrapped up in the aglessness of mankind. When the individual seeks to compel someone else to live and believe as he does he brands himself as one of the greatest egotists the world has ever produced.

I do not suggest that anyone not be loyal to the things he does believe. He will be worthless if he does not characterize things in which he does believe. -----
-----to make slaves; with some of the awful places with which we are confronted; one hold death over the workers, its citizens, its subjects, to compel them (or you or me) and all mankind to live and believe as they do.

These six cardinal mistakes of mankind are generalities, and yet I think they are sufficient.

- - - - -

I have been told, or I know directly some of the outstanding progress being made in your community. I know of the \$550,000.00 hospital, a magnificent setup for Green County and Greensburg; I know of your new sewage disposal plant and sewer system; I know of the plans for expanded, or expanding, school facilities; and other improvements being undertaken in Green County today, anyone of which would not and could not have been undertaken by the city or county 25 years ago. It could not happen if there were not a minimum amount of the mistakes I have listed, but in our individual lives - - - - - to do something about it.

The Rotary Club **has** as its motto: "He profiteth most who serveth best." I would like to congratulate you for what is taking place here in your community, and you deserve to be congratulated. You have not only the Geographical location, you have the traffic routes, and you have the greatest natural resources any community can have. - - - - - if we are not now doing works of vision in Green County, we can improve by stopping and meditating on these things, then act upon it, it is worthwhile. If these are pretty good, there are lots of others which need to be and can be done.

In 106 B.C. there was a philosopher named Julius Marcus Cicero. He was a great philosopher and one night he wrote an essay. In this essay he wrote, "I consider the most cardinal mistakes of men to be:

"(1) The delusion that individual advancement must be made by crushing, or climbing on the backs of others.

(2) The tendency to worry about things which cannot be changed.

(3) Insisting things are impossible because we cannot accomplish them.

(4) Refusing to set aside trivial preferences or pettiness.

(5) Neglecting the development of the mind and the continued study of assimilated knowledge.

(6) Attempting to compel others to live and believe as we do."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could master these six mistakes? Or even just five of them? Or even one of them?

I thank you.

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(Address by Dr. Kelly Thompson at Greensburg, Kentucky on October 10, 1961 before the Rotary Club and guests at Greensburg High School) (Transcribed from the shorthand notes taken by Lena B. McDaniel.)