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## Way Of Influence

By Mrs. Paul E. King

From the March 4, 1973 Sunday School Beacon

I settled my petite, barely five foot frame comfortably in the chair nearest me after I had made my book selection in the public library in our town and began perusing its contents with relish. Always a sure enough book-worm, I found myself completely captivated and and thoroughly absorbed in the first chapter of this particular book I had selected.

By the time I got into chapters three and four I was lost entirely as to time, place, environment, and anybody and everybody around me.



"Hi yourself. Can't you see I'm busy?" I answered brusquely.

"Hi!" a timid voice ventured softly from across my shoulder. Annoyed, I turned to see who was speaking to me. Who would dare to invade my privacy.

"Hi, Jean," the voice repeated. Disgusted and vexed and in a tone of voice that plainly said as much, I answered brusquely, "Hi yourself. Can't you see I'm busy?"

With a flush of deep pink rushing in embarrassment to her fair cheeks, LeAn apologized profusely then excused herself and hurried away.

I settled back again and began reading; but, try as I may, I couldn't get absorbed. A little voice inside me wouldn't allow it. "And you were going to prove to LeAn that Holiness of heart works!" The inner voice seemed to shout the words at me... to pound them in my ears. "A fine display of the sanctified life you are!"

My mouth and lips went suddenly dry and my throat felt extremely hot and burned me. At the same time, my spittle turned to something that was closely akin to cotton and my heart hammered inside my chest like a giant electric drill.

"Oh dear Lord, I'm sorry! Forgive me!" I moaned, my face dropping into my hands. "I'm so sorry . . ."

Realization dawned upon me then, clear and bright but ugly, too. I wasn't sanctified like I had professed to be!

I did a quick turn about face and tried (honestly tried) to find LeAn. She was nowhere to be seen.

I closed the book and hurried through the library. I must find her and apologize. I must! You see, God had helped me to lead LeAn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

She was quite a character before her conversion.., drank, smoked, danced, and dressed in accordance with all the latest styles, fads, and fashions and such. But oh, what a change in her life and deportment since she was converted!

Well, I'd been telling LeAn that God had a second definite work of grace for her called Holiness of heart -- that she needed the sweet Holy Spirit to cleanse her heart from inbred sin. I told her this experience of heart purity would keep her sweet under all of life's pressures, its stresses, vexations and strains. And now...!

I hung my head in shame as I hurried to the historical book section, remembering that LeAn too, had a report to give along the same line and in much the same category as I. It was sometime before I found her, but when I did I flung my arms around her and buried my head on her shoulder. "Oh, LeAn, forgive me! I'm terribly sorry that I was so brusque and unkind with you." I was sobbing. "There is something to Holiness of heart and life. My folks possess it. I don't. God revealed this to me when you interrupted me and I was so sharp and brusque to you."

"That's all right, Jean," LeAn said softly. "You disappointed me, I must admit, but I know God has something more for me: my heart tells me so and, too, I've watched you closely. Up to this little episode of a few minutes ago, you had proven there was something to it. You... couldn't help it..."

"That's just it, LeAn!" I exclaimed tearfully. "I couldn't help it! You see, it was the old carnal nature within me, rising up, asserting itself and giving expression to the fact that it was still very much alive and extremely active. Up to now, I fully believed I was sanctified and had a clean heart; however, I now know that's not so. I felt something inside me rise up when I was interrupted. But I'll not allow this to remain. I'll do something about it. I will! God's power is able to thoroughly and completely cleanse and purge and purify my heart. I'm going to the church and pray until I know I'm wholly sanctified."

"May . . . I go too?" LeAn's words came out falteringly but sincerely.

"Of course you may, LeAn. Carnality's a dreadfully dangerous thing to harbor in one's soul. If harbored, it's sure death to the spiritual life. The Apostle Paul defined it as a 'root of bitterness' that springs up suddenly, troubling you and defiling many."

LeAn's face turned pale as I finished.

We checked our books out then walked to the church in silence.

Twilight was just falling when we came out through the church doors. I was sure our faces were shining for our hearts were now cleansed and made pure. We were filled to overflowing with Divine love.

LeAn broke the spell of the Holy atmosphere with a question. "Know what helped to convince me that sanctification must be real and was obtainable?" she asked as we walked homeward in the cool shade of early evening.

I told her I didn't know.

"When you sought me out in the library," she said candidly, "and asked my forgiveness then confessed your need, I knew there had to be something very genuine and real to your salvation. God showed me then and there that if you needed to be sanctified I, too, needed it. You see, Jean, I've been having myriad inward battles. But now.., now," her face bespoke of perfect inner soul rest and peace as she testified, "Now I have nothing but love. Holy, Divine love. Your life and your influence led me into salvation and now into holiness of heart."

As I bid LeAn a pleasant good evening on the corner of Canal and Oak St. where we parted to go to our respective homes, my heart felt light and extremely happy. I learned a lesson; one I shall never forget" It pays to be honest . . . with both God and man. We can deceive neither one. What we are speaks far louder than what we say, many times.

My happy heart rejoiced as I entered the lawn of our home. How wonderful it was to be a real Christian and how delightful it was to do His will -- with a Holy heart!

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**THE END**