

## **HONESTY IN RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Note:**

- ✓ *For satisfying and true relationships honesty is essential.*
- ✓ *Dishonesty and phoniness kill any human relationships, between friends, marriage partners, teachers and pupils, etc,*

### **The Shepherds And The Wall**

Once upon a time there was a large, green open countryside. Cutting across that countryside, you could see a huge, high wall. It was the boundary wall between two neighboring countries. No one ever was allowed to jump over that wall, not even to peep over it. Shepherds and shepherdesses were only allowed to graze their flocks on their own side of the wall.

On one side of the wall you could see Patrick – an ugly, tiny and deformed shepherd boy. He had a repelling appearance. Yet, he was a real master in the art of playing the flute. The tunes he struck from his ordinary flute were simply enrapturing, enthralling. While minding his little flock and sitting with his back against the wall with his flute in his mouth he was filling the air with the most enrapturing tunes and melodies.

On the other side of the wall you could see a young shepherdess. She was ugly, short, dark, squint eyed, just a sight to see!. Yet, she could pride herself of the sweetest and most melodious voice ever. One day, Patrick was more inspired than ever; the music emanating from his flute was celestial!

The little shepherd girl sitting at the other side of the wall, was simply enchanted by that music. In admiration, with the sweetest voice ever heard she exclaimed: “Oh! What music! It’s wonderful! I could die of joy!” When the shepherd boy heard that sweet, silvery voice his heart missed a beat and said: “Yes? Do you like it? I am so glad! I could play for you till the end of my life!”

With a shy and quivering voice the girl responded: “Oh! I am so glad! But now, tell; tell me, what’s your name? Tell me who are you, and how do you look? I am sure you must be terrific!”

Patrick replied: “Tell me also, what your name is? Who are you? How do you look like? A voice as sweet as yours cannot come but from a most beautiful and attractive girl! Right?”

She said: “My name is Rose. I am very beautiful. I am tall and slim. I have a lovely figure. I am very womanly. I am fair. People say that I look like a little Princess. Now, tell me about yourself. I want to know about you.

The shepherd boy replied: “Well, my name is Patrick. I am tall and muscular. I am very manly and attractive. I am strong, a good athlete. I am very handsome. Some people say that I was born to be a King!” Rose exclaimed: “O Pat, how I love you!”. Patrick reciprocated: “O Rose, How much I love you!

From that day on Rose and Patrick spent endless hours speaking to each other over the wall. Patrick used to play delicious tunes while Rose sang. It was a pleasure to hear them. Their talents matched so well that they seemed to have been made for each other.

As the days passed by, they grew deeper and deeper in love with each other. In her dreams, Rose used to imagine how handsome, attractive, manly, muscular and lovely Pat was. Patrick too, night and day dreamt of how womanly, fair, beautiful and attractive Rose must be!.

How eagerly they ran daily to the wall to hear each other’s voice and speak without end of sweet nothings. How much they loved each other! Yet when they were away from each other, they were feeling strangely worried, fearful, and unsatisfied. All those sweet nothings, all those declarations of love in the long run made their hearts anxious.

After many days there was an earthquake. The big wall shook, cracked and finally collapsed. That day, Rose and Patrick, with heavy and anxious hearts took their little flocks to graze. As they approached the broken wall they were full of misgivings and fears. Each one was questioning himself, herself: “Will he, will she, love me still, being what I am? “

As they reached the broken wall, fearfully and with anxious looks they searched for one another. Unknowingly, they chanced to stand in front of each other, but they couldn't recognize one another.

After a long search, they realized that their beloved wasn't there! In utter frustration and disappointment each one muttered to himself self..."**Oh, too bad! She! He! Is not there! She, he is not come today! May be he, she will come tomorrow! To say the same self thing tomorrow!**

### **Points Helpful for the Reflection and Discussion.**

1. Why did Patrick and Rose lie to one another?
2. Actually what were they trying to?
3. Why, after so much talk about how much they loved each other, they were still feeling nervous and unsatisfied?
4. Did they really love each other or rather what were they in love with?
5. Why were they so frightened when the wall collapsed?
6. How is it that when they faced each other, they could not recognize one another?
7. Why their "loving relationship" ended in frustration and disappointment?
8. Can you distinguish between our "real self" and the "image" we project of self?
9. For true and lasting relationships, what's really is more important "reality" or "image"? Why?
10. Can you explain why so many promising friendships and relationships take off gloriously but end in a premature crash?
11. How is it that we are more inclined to "project images" of ourselves rather than to "show what we really are, "our true selves"?"
12. Mention some of the harmful effects of our "building wrong, distorted and inflated images of self

### **Points for Self Examination.**

1. When mixing with others, are you too afraid of doing mistakes?
2. Are you trying to create "good impressions"?
3. When dealing with people are you defensive, trying to justify yourself?
4. While talking with others, do you talk too much, or too little?
5. Do you try to intimidate others with the tone of your voice, by talking too emphatically or categorically?
6. Do you like to "hear" yourself?
7. Are you oversensitive or touchy? Do you easily get hurt and offended?
8. What are the things you try to hide from others? Why?
9. What are your 'status symbols'? : namely, the things that make you feel valuable and lovable in the sight of others - things that may boost your self-image and give you confidence - such as: degrees, high marks in your studies, external success, wealth, fashionable clothes, cosmetics, posh personal articles, extravagant expenses, etc?.
10. What are the things you would never disclose to your friends?
11. Are there any things or any weaknesses in you that you find it hard to accept?
12. In your prayer life, are you absolutely honest to God or rather formal, ritualistic, conventional, composed and dignified?

**What do all these things tell you about yourself?**

## **APPENDIX**

### **Why do we build false images and try to impress others?**

- Lack of "self-confidence".
- An urge, a need to impress others.
- Inferiority complexes.
- Craving to be liked.
- Dislike of self.
- Self-rejection.
- Poor "self-image".
- Pain of past rejections.
- Ignorance of one's positive points and qualities.
- Trying to measure up to others' expectations
- Societal standards, ideals thrust on us by significant people, prevalent values, etc.
- Lack of "self-assertion".
- Having experienced love and forgiveness only as "conditional".

- “Self-worth” is placed outside oneself, in people’s appreciation.

### **What are the Consequences of “dishonesty” in Communication**

- Anxieties.
- Fears
- Tensions.
- Loss of energies by building and keeping up false images.
- Disappointments and frustrations.
- Loneliness. Lack of intimacy and true friendships.
- Artificiality – phoniness.
- Superficiality and shallowness in our relationships.’
- Inability to love and to be loved.
- Feeling forced to play roles and keep up appearances.
- Emptiness and meaningless in life.