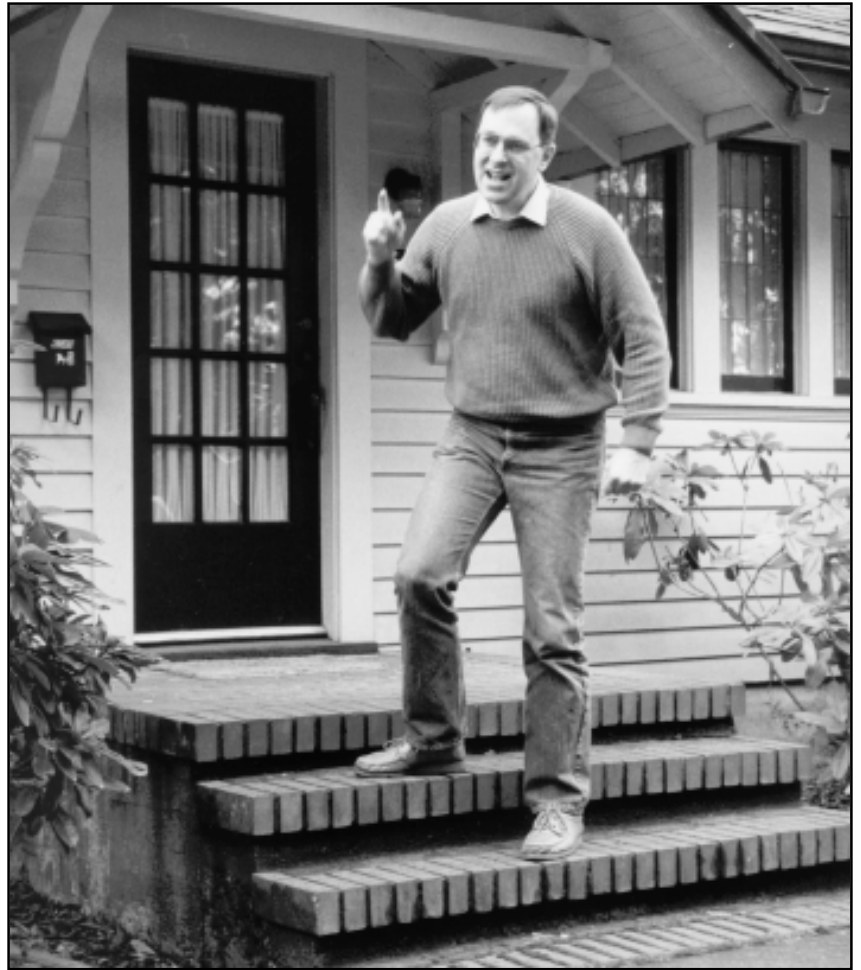


Bill and Debbie showed brotherly kindness, and were rewarded when Mr. Johnson had

A Change of Mind

TEXT: 2 Kings 4:8-17



“YOU KIDS GET AWAY from this house!” a gruff voice called out. Debbie and Bill gave a startled glance at the man in the yard they were standing by, and quickly ran to the other side of the street.

“Wow, Mr. Johnson seems to get grouchier every day!” Bill muttered. “First he wouldn’t let Tim play with us; now he won’t even let us near their house. I wonder why he hates us so much?”

“I don’t know, but I sure feel sorry for Tim! He can’t come to Sunday school anymore either.”

“That’s too bad,” replied Bill, “and it doesn’t look like Mr. Johnson is going to change his mind.”

The next day at school, Bill talked to Tim during recess. “Why won’t your dad let us come to your house?”

“When I told Dad about Sunday school, and that I had gotten saved, he just laughed at me. But when I told him he was a sinner too, and needed to be saved, he got really mad and said I wasn’t to go anywhere near you or any other Christians anymore.”

“I’ll pray that something will change his mind, Tim. At least we’ll see each other at school.”

The next Saturday evening Debbie and Bill were riding their bikes past Tim’s house. Debbie suddenly stopped. “Bill,” she whispered, “look over there at the side of the Johnson’s house! It looks like someone is trying to get in through that basement window. We’d better call the police! I think Tim and his dad are out of town.”

“Why should we help Mr. Johnson? He won’t let Tim come to Sunday school anymore, so why should we do anything for him?”

“Bill,” Debbie scolded, “the Bible says that we are to love our enemies. Besides, Tim is a Christian. The Bible tells us that if we show kindness to our brothers and sisters in Christ, then other people will know we love Jesus. It certainly wouldn’t be kind to let Tim’s house be broken into if we can do anything to stop it.”

“O.K., I’ll stand watch while you go call the police!”

Within a few minutes, the police arrived—in time to catch the burglar. Debbie and Bill were questioned before they went home.

On Monday, Bill and Debbie were walking past the Johnson's on their way home from school when they heard someone call, "Hey, you kids!"

"Oh, no, it's Mr. Johnson," Debbie grimaced. "We'd better get going!"

"No, wait, I want to talk to you," Mr. Johnson called to them again. They stopped, amazed. Mr. Johnson approached them. "The police told me how you called them when you saw someone trying to get into the house and, well . . . I'm grateful. Most kids wouldn't have bothered to do anything about it, especially after the way I've treated you. Why did you do it?"

Debbie spoke up. "Well, Mr. Johnson, the Bible says that we're supposed to love our neighbors, and besides, Tim is a Christian now. That means we are in the same family—God's family. Brothers and sisters help each other. We sure would like to see him come to Sunday school with us again."

"You two have made me feel ashamed of myself. I want to apologize. I should be proud that my boy has friends like you."

"Does that mean you'll let Tim come to Sunday school with us?"

Mr. Johnson smiled, "I'll do better than that. I'll bring him myself!"

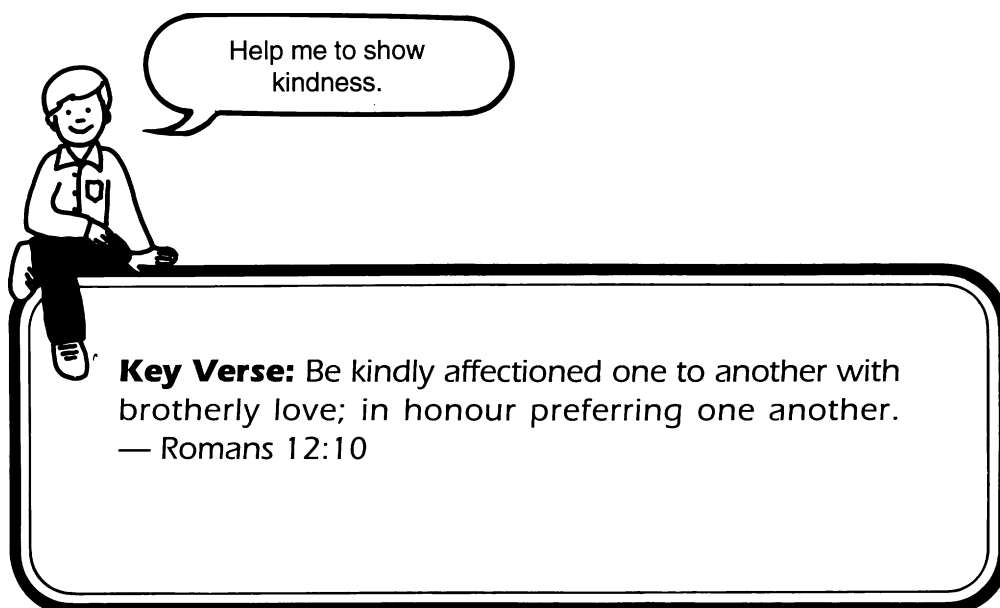
Debbie was thrilled! "Mr. Johnson, that's great news! Everyone will be so glad to see Tim again, and they'll be especially happy to welcome you."

In the Bible there is a story of God's prophet, Elisha. As he passed through the city of Shunem, one day, a woman saw him and invited him to eat at a meal at her home. After that day, whenever Elisha passed through Shunem, he was invited to eat at her home. One day, the woman asked her husband to build a room on the rooftop of their house. The room would be for Elisha to rest in during his visits. Her husband liked the idea, so he built the room. The next time Elisha visited the city, he was surprised and pleased to see a room built just for him! He wanted to repay their kindness, so he told his servant, Gehazi, to say to the woman, "You have been very kind. What can I do for you?" But the couple wanted nothing in return. The woman said they were happy to live just as they were.

Then, Elisha asked his servant what should be done for the woman. Gehazi told him that the couple had no child. Elisha called the woman to him. As she stood in the doorway of his room, Elisha promised her that she would have a son, and within a year a baby boy was born to the woman and her husband.

The woman and her husband gave to Elisha, never expecting to be repaid, but they received a wonderful reward.

In these stories, Debbie and Bill, and the woman of Shunem did what God's Word tells us to do—show brotherly kindness. They gave without expecting a reward, and God blessed them in a great way.



Help me to show kindness.

Key Verse: Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.
— Romans 12:10

Love Your Brother

Brotherly kindness is preferring others and choosing to do good for others. It is showing real love. Complete the sentences and answer the question below.

I think "Love" means . . .

To show kindness to someone I . . .

An example of an unkind action is . . .

I know I am loved when . . .

Why should I love my enemy?

