

From the Editor



There is a great word in the English language, that when practically implemented, make for an extremely civilized society. That word is of course "sportsmanship." Now, sportsmanship really speaks of an attitude we display to our fellowmen (and for those among our readers who are very PC minded, fellowmen includes ladies as well). We've all heard the oh-so-British expression (and hear it with the Queen's accent), "Be a sport, old boy!"

But more than this, sportsmanship speaks about the respect we have and display for one another, whether on the sports field or off. Good sportsmanship speaks about our consideration for those who occupy our space, and also for the space of others we occupy.

The origin of the word (I assume) would have been from the sports arena where, even in a highly charged and competitive surrounding, one could accept defeat with a certain amount of grace. With any match, game, or competition we have great examples of both good sportsmanship as well as poor displays of attitude and behaviour. I also think that as parents (and as teachers of our future leaders) we have a tremendous responsibility towards training our children in the art of sportsmanship. Sportsmanship, like charity, starts at home!

But sportsmanship extends into all arenas of life, doesn't it? Would you not consider it good sportsmanship when people obey the rules of the road, stopping at a red traffic light for example! Gentleman standing up when a lady enters a room, a guy standing back to allow a lady first entrance into a room (Western culture), or a guy walking into a room first to make sure the lady following him will be safe (African cultures).

And then, of course, I think good or poor sportsmanship extends even into the spiritual realm; I equate sportsmanship with attitude, so the extent to which you approach life will yield the desired results. Spiritually speaking our lives can either be ruled by fear or by faith – there is no middle ground in life. When we are ruled by fear, our attitudes will tend to display the negativity and poor sportsmanship (rudeness, impatience, anger) will result. However, the flipside is when we approach life with a positive attitude that is based in faith. Now faith for me is a two-way street; it is firstly the faith we have in God and ourselves to accomplish things, and secondly (and equally important) the faith that God has in us! God's faith in us should be a motivating factor for a good attitude, after all, He entrusted us with the message of hope and love to give to a world lost in fear and insecurity.

So the next time we find ourselves in a situation where we are tempted to display poor sportsmanship, perhaps it would do us well to remember that our real task on earth is to support, encourage and build up the people around us with a positive and love-filled message of hope.

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