Contemporary Comments on the Adult Sabbath School Lesson

[Title] Priestly Garments of Grace
[Use] April 30, 2011

It's a story almost too painful to hear. Last weekend at a slumber party in rural Minnesota, two young girls carried out a suicide pact. The bodies of best friends Haylee Fentress and Paige Moravetz were found Saturday morning by Haylee's mother. They were only 14 years old.1

The reason for taking their own lives? Apparently they were victims of bullying.

Robin Settle, Haylee's aunt, said that her niece and family had recently moved to a new town and that the girl felt ostracized and bullied. Haylee told her aunt that she was made fun of because she was overweight, and because of her red hair. She said that kids at school were mean and cruel, and she didn't feel like she fit in. Paige was not treated well at school either. In fact, Haylee was recently expelled for defending her during a fight.

Robin told ABC News: "I'm shocked and I'm mad and I'm sad. I don't understand the mentality of kids torturing other kids, kids having to go through this. They don't think they have anywhere to go.

Robin feels that the kids who bullied her niece didn't know the real Haylee. "She was actually one of the most giving loving girls you would ever meet. She just loved everyone unconditionally. She couldn't stand people to be made fun of, tortured, teased. She stood up for the underdogs and she was one herself," she said.

Kids aren't the only ones being bullied. Adults are often victims of verbal and emotionally bullying through gossip, sarcasm or demeaning comments. Leadership Coach and author Susan Cramm believes that we need to stop labeling people and show more compassion, and see others for who they really are. She offers these five tips:2

1. Assume the best in others. See others as someone's mom, dad, daughter, son, sister or brother. Don't assume that they're out to do wrong or bad things. They have their own set of pressures.

2. Understand what makes others tick. Humanize them by working to understand their backgrounds, dreams and what might make life tough for them.

3. Serve their needs. Go the extra mile with people. Help them, share with them—and even praise them! These are "unexpected extras" that can make a difference.


5. Assume the best intentions. View other's behaviors and motives in the most positive way possible. If you instead choose to complain about people, it turns you into a victim.

Even with our best efforts, at times others will fail us and we will fail others. But the solution isn't to become so depressed that we don't want to live. The solution is found in Hebrews 4:14, 15: "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin" Jesus understands what it feels like to be picked on, made fun of and ignored. Like Aaron, Jesus knew trials and tribulations—so our High Priest really can sympathize with us. And as Aaron wore the names of the sons of Israel upon the breastplate over his heart, Jesus symbolically wears our names there, too. Yet unlike Aaron, Jesus didn't sin. And that’s what makes all the difference. Because Jesus not only sympathizes with us, Jesus covers us with a robe of righteousness that could only be ours because our High Priest once lived among us.

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1. ABC News
2. Blogs

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