

## Is That You, Ethel?

This story is making the rounds. I have heard it several times lately, including once a few Sundays ago from the pulpit of First Baptist Church of Cleveland. It goes like this:

An elderly man lay in a hospital with his wife of 55 years sitting at his bedside. “Is that you, Ethel, at my side again?” he whispered.

“Yes, dear,” she answered.

He softly said to her, “Remember years ago when I was in the Veteran’s Hospital? You were with me then. You were with me when we lost everything in a fire. And Ethel, when we were poor – you stuck with me then, too.”

The man sighed and said, “I tell you, Ethel, you are bad luck.”

As laughable as that account is, it all too sadly demonstrates an attitude that some folks have. You know the kind; there may be someone in your family like that. Hopefully, you don’t work with anyone who has that sort of outlook.

Instead of seeing the good side – the loyalty, the support, the caring, the positive – they are finding fault, or expressing criticism of someone else, or looking to tear down what has been built up. Instead of gratitude, they are ungrateful for acts of kindness or support.

Relationships – with one another and with the residents we serve in Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home – are built with people who are happy, upbeat, positive, encouraging and thankful for the gift of friends. And that includes long-standing acquaintanceships, as well as the new ones we make every day.

--Beecher Hunter