

**A VILLAGE ON THE ROAD BY PEDRO PABLO SACRISTAN<sup>4</sup>**

In a land far away, once upon a time there was great poverty: only the rich could manage without great problems. Three of those rich men, and their servants, were traveling on the same road, in a convoy, when they came to a very poor village. Seeing this poverty provoked different reactions in all three rich men.

The first could not stand to see it, so he took all the gold and jewels from his wagons and shared them out among the villagers. He wished them all the best of luck, and he left.

The second rich man, seeing the desperate situation, stopped for a short time, and gave the villagers all his food and drink, since he could see that money would be of little use to them. He made sure that each villager received their fair share and would have enough food to last for some time. Then, he left.

The third rich man, on seeing such poverty, sped up and traveled straight through the village without stopping. The two other rich men saw this from a distance and commented with each other how the third rich man lacked decency and compassion. It was good that they had been there to help the poor villagers.

However, three days later, they met the third rich man who was traveling in the opposite direction. He was still traveling quickly, but his wagons, instead of the gold and valuables they had been carrying, were now full of farming implements, tools, and sacks of seeds and grain. He was heading to the poor village to work with the people there.

This happened a long, long time ago, but we can see the very same thing happening today too. There are some generous people who give only so that people can see how much they are giving. They don't want to know anything about the people they are giving to. Other generous people really try to help others, but only so that they can feel better about themselves. But there are other generous people: the best kind. To them, it does not matter what the other kinds of generous people think of them. Nor do they give in a showy way. Instead, they truly worry about how best to improve the lives of those they are helping. They give something much more valuable than money. They give their time, their vision and their lives.

We still have time to become like the third man.

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<sup>4</sup> The third way of thinking, The New Times, available at <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/56691/the-third-way-of-thinking> (last visited Dec 7, 2022).