

Kindness: An Afterthought

How did you do last week; were you any better at being kind?

I found myself thinking about kindness all week. Frankly, it was as if 'kindness' was chasing after me, rearing its head at every turn. I know how that sounds, but there were a number of rather unpleasant experiences.

At Every Turn

We are instructed in scripture to be hospitable, but that does not really apply to the workplace. Kindness is different; it does not have to wait for the right time and place. Kindness is appropriate at every turn on the path of life.

We constantly encounter people and as a result have opportunities to show kindness. It could be as simple as holding a door or allowing extra space for someone to switch lanes in front of you while driving. It could be a kind word to a store clerk or listening to your spouse *before* blathering about your day. Kindness is really, really simple, but opportunities are easily overlooked.

Hurry! Be Kind!

Monday morning on the road: "You weirdo! Don't cut in front of me. I'll show you." [Honnnnnnk! Speed around the cutter.]

I waited at the next red light with the cutter right behind me. I realized just how unkind my thoughts and actions were. [Tuesday morning, and afternoon were no better. More weird drivers and more honking.]

Kindness is much more difficult when in a hurry. (Impatience is easy.) I don't think I've ever heard a parent instruct a child, "Hurry, be kind."

Love is patient. Love is kind. (1 Cor. 13:7)

After Me

Monday afternoon, home: I opened the door and there stood one of my children – right in the doorway. She pushed through and I barked. I told her that she should have been more considerate and allowed the other person to go first (me). There I was, empty-handed and quite able to step back myself and demonstrate a simple kindness. I don't think I really taught a good lesson that day.

Teach them in your home, as you go along the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (Deut. 6:7 paraphrased)

The Kindness of Others is Impressive

Monday evening – popping corn:

The microwave beeper sounded; the popcorn was ready. Kris immediately jumped up. I told her I could get it and she sat back down. I later reflected on the number of times she took care of things and no one offered to help. I felt a little shame as I realized how many kindnesses are shown to me on a daily basis by my family.

The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds. (Psalm 145:17)

The Grouch

Tuesday afternoon at the store:

Before examining the labels on the bags of fertilizer I intentionally stopped and asked the store worker if my cart was in his way. His grunt was unintelligible so I began my research. Just a moment later the grouchy old fellow called out to a coworker that he couldn't move his pallet because people were in the way. I quickly made an uninformed selection and ran. I noted that there are a few grouches out there who are not quick to respond to kindness.

But love your enemies, and do good ... and your reward will be great; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. (Luke 6:35)

I Want to be Like That

In a matter of seconds, almost without thought, Kris and I named four couples that have been a major influence and encouragement in our lives. Without discussion we agreed that we wanted to be like them. And what was it that stood out in these couples? Kindness, of course. Oh the power of a good example.

There was a disciple named Tabitha who was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. (Acts 9:36)

I have more to learn, how about you? How will you show kindness this week?

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