

“Love is not communicated in the big event but in the small acts of kindness.” Richard Foster

“Kindness is a language that deaf people can hear, and blind people can see.” Charles Swindoll

Proverbs 12:25 *An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.*

In a 2003 study of 37 cultures around the world, 16,000 people were asked about their most desired traits in a mate. For both sexes, the first preference was kindness. Kindness has been found by social scientists to be the most important predictor of satisfaction and stability in a marriage.

Research has also confirmed that it’s actually beneficial to do an act of kindness or generosity for someone else. Scientists have discovered that our brains release neurotransmitters (endorphins) that make us feel good when we do good. Psychologists refer to this as the “helper’s high.”

In my April 22 devotion I shared that I was in the drive-through lane at Starbucks, and when I arrived at the window to pay I was told the car in front of me paid for my order. Two days later it happened again. And then yesterday, and again today. Kindness was extended to me – and they got “high.” I am speechless. What generosity and what a blessing – from strangers!

According to the Bible, the people of God should be the most kind of all. Consider this important visual:

Greek: chrestos = KIND

Greek: christos = CHRIST

In the 1st century, the believers were so *kind* that many people didn’t know whether their title was “follower of Christ,” or “follower of kindness.” What a legacy they left.

Kindness doesn’t come naturally (at least for me). Because of sin’s damage, we gravitate to selfishness. But the good news is (Titus 3:4-5) *When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.*

Though we didn’t deserve it, Jesus still responded with *goodness* and *kindness*. He’s the ultimate example of grace. We’re now able to share kindness because we’ve received kindness ourselves – and not just a Starbucks drive-through kindness, but the most extravagant display of kindness in human history – the gift of Jesus.

What does living a life of kindness mean for us? It means restraining our impulse to speak impetuously. It means praying every day (Psalm 19:14) *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.*

It means (Romans 12:10) *Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.*

It means (Galatians 6:2) *Carry each other's burdens.*

It means (Ephesians 4:32) *Be kind to one another, [how?] tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

The best thing about kindness, though, is that it comes with a double blessing. The person who offers kindness gets as much or more out of the act as the recipient. Proverbs 11:17 *A man who is kind benefits himself . . .* I guess that could be viewed as a "healthy" selfishness.

May the spiritual gift of relentless kindness be unleashed in our lives.