

G. REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE ACT KINDER THAN I DO

Kindness is always focused on someone else.

He who is forgiven much loves much.

“but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

Luke 7.47

Rate yourself.

How natural does Kindness come for you compared to a couple years ago?

- Pretty easily
- I used to be better and could work harder at this
- It's 6-8 on a 10 point scale of difficulty
- Extremely difficult or demanding



There is no simple explanation as to why two people respond differently to the same stimuli or same adversity. But as an individual, you and I can choose to have a good response. We are never faced with the necessity to speak sinfully. The same sun softens butter, but hardens clay. Never blame your circumstances, your health, your job, your genes, or your grandma's legendary temper for your bad behavior.

One sentence nuggets of golden kindness.



- ◇ It is generally true that those who were exposed from childhood to any consistent outlook on life tend to embrace that philosophy for their own, whether good or bad.
- ◇ Those who have suffered, who have known poverty or oppression, are generally the most prone to kindness.
Arthur Lynch, Moods of Life
- ◇ “Who does not feel happier on showing kindness.”
Nicias Ballard Cooksey Helps to Happiness

A SKETCH OF KINDNESS

During my second year of nursing school our professor gave us a quiz. I breezed through the questions until I read the last one: “What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?” surely this was a joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our grade. “Absolutely,” the professor said. “In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say hello.” I've never forgotten lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

Joann C Jones

One sentence nuggets of golden kindness.



- ◇ Steffie was the thoughtful 9-year old whose grandma told her, “Never forget Steffie, everybody you meet is just a little bit lonely.”
- ◇ When I was young I used to admire intelligent people, as I grow older I admire kind people.

FOURTEEN REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE ACT KINDER THAN I

- They love God's smile upon their lives.
- They lived with a kind family.
- They lived in a mean and demeaning home and wanted something better for their own kids.
- They're just plain tired of arguing.
- They revel in the joy of giving.
- They have learned by experience that the joy of giving is a better harvest than the enjoyment of collecting fame, things, power, fun, experience, selfishness, and a lot of other trifles.

OR

- They are frauds, but they love the recognition of doing all those good things.
- They fear hell.
- They fear family or society's disfavor.
- They've found that they make more money pretending to be nice.
- Self-gratification. They like to feel good about themselves.
- They grasp at the praise of man. They want earthly rewards for being a good Christian. They are trying to earn God's favor and eternal life by good works.
- They revel in being better than some of their friends.
- They get to compare themselves favorably to others who aren't quite so nice.

A SKETCH OF KINDNESS

An undercover FBI agent was assigned to infiltrate a motorcycle gang known to have committed several murders. He would be imbedded for many months and perhaps more than a year. He would be away from all his friends at FBI headquarters and have minimum contact with anyone he knew including family. Part of his initiation was so vile that [but not illegal] that many wannabe gang members didn't pass. His job was to collect enough evidence and then testify against the gang in court.

Over many months he came to know each member quite well. This became his surrogate family but he never wavered in his resolve to put these bad guys behind bars. He lived with them 24 hours a day. They were hardened criminals.

During this time his mother died and he asked permission from the king pin to go to his mother's funeral in his hometown far away. The gang lynchpin gave him permission and asked when he'd return. For obvious reasons none of the gang members could accompany him, but it was strange that none of his fellow agents turned up for the funeral even though they lived nearby. No FBI agent called to share in his grief. None of them even sent a card. He was alone in his sadness.

When he returned to the gang the king and the gang gave him long man-hugs, sat in silence, shared his pain, and even wept with him.

They carried him in their friendship.

If you have a tongue, you have a problem. Remember James' words? "The tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity...and is set on fire by hell!" "No one can tame the tongue!" [James 3] If that be true, it evidently takes divine strength to control the words we speak. I think of this in two ways.

Part I WORK HARD—Practice depending intentionally on the Holy Spirit to help choose our words. Remember David's encouragement, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations [thoughts] of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, my Lord, my strength and my redeemer." [Psalm 19.14] This takes a lot of effort.

There are those of us who take great pride in speaking our mind. We admire our honesty or willingness to "tell it like it is." We consider openness a noble quality even when it hurt others' feelings. We like to give advice the same way we like to receive it—straight from the shoulder. We assume our spouses want us to be forthright and candid. I suppose like me, you often ignore two of Paul's admonitions to "speak the truth in love" and "let your words be always with grace, seasoned with salt." [Ephesians 4.15 & Colossians 4.6]

Part II WORK ON AUTO PILOT –Taming the tongue requires that we spend much time intentionally speaking kindly. The plan is that it becomes second nature to honor the Lord with our words. Develop a habit. Form a pattern. Perfect a repetition. Etch the motions in your brain. Train your muscles to move unencumbered. Eventually the concentration level evolved into an automatic response. We could focus on the opponent rather than on the moves we were making. Some have called this secondary passive concentration. But if we will devote ourselves earnestly to honoring God with our words for a long time, we will be pleased to see how much He is pleased to see our progress.



One sentence nuggets of golden kindness.

- ◇ Saying you're sorry doesn't mean others will forgive you. Say it, and mean it anyway, and now change your stinking behavior. *Jim Ryan, Jr*
- ◇ Proverbs 16.3 Commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established. KJV
- ◇ Slow growth and growth deferred is still a sign of progress.
- ◇ Forgiveness is not an emotion, it is a decision. *Corrie ten Boom*

How would you like to have grown up as Jesus' little brother? Well, James did just that and he learned a powerful lesson. Words can hurt—and words can heal. After his brother Jesus rose from the dead, James became the pastor of the huge Jerusalem church. A bit later many Jews fled town as persecution ramped up and his congregation began to disperse. James wrote a long letter to “the scattered believers” [Diaspora]. I look at this book, James, as a collection of sermonettes; outline notes from sermons these dispersed church members had heard James preach while they were living in Jerusalem. We've all heard our pastors refer to topics they've preached in other sermons.

STOP!

Decision Time

Don't go to the next chapter until you have marked at least one “Homework Assignment.”

- I will work hard at remembering that others' feelings get hurt just as much as mine.
- I will remember to be kind.
- I will carry others' sorrows.

A verse to write out and tape to your bathroom mirror, dash, or desk.

Commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established.
Proverbs 16.3 KJV

*Decide to be kind with your words no matter
how awful you feel.*