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**THOUGHTS FROM JEREMY**

Kindness brings a breath of fresh air. With all that is going on in the world, an act of kindness really stands out. In May, I was in a store buying some birthday presents for my wife. After the cashier rang up the purchase, I handed her cash to pay. Suddenly, a lady who had just finished checking out in the line next to me came over to the register where I was and handed the cashier a gift card. She said, “I want to help pay for this man’s purchase. I begged her not to and told her she could help someone else. She insisted and said, “I really want to do this.”

After the cashier ran the gift card, she handed me back a one-hundred-dollar bill and some change. By this time, the lady who had done this was out the door. I caught up to her in the parking lot and I was able to thank her and visit with her for a minute. She told me she had been given a gift card and only used half of it, so she wanted to share it with me.

This lady’s selfless act of kindness blew me away. When I got to the car, full of tears, I called Brittani to share what had happened. However, I did not realize that in the process I told her how much her present cost and that I did not pay for it, someone else did.

Kindness of any kind can change someone’s day. It does not have to be an extravagant one-hundred-dollar gift to some random stranger. It can simply be a kind word or helping someone in need. Not only can kindness change someone’s day, it should characterize who we are as Christians. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22, *“kindness is a fruit of the Spirit.”*

Not only is kindness a character trait we all should possess, our kindness needs to be a direct reflection of the kindness God showed us through Jesus. Ephesians 2:7 says, *“…so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”* In these times where we see a lot of negativity and discouragement, let us all live out the fruit of the Spirit and show kindness to others!

Blessings,

Jeremy

**Elder’s Corner**

Sticks and Stones

When I was a child, a common saying was, “sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” I do not know when that saying started, but the idea behind it was that names, directed towards us, or words spoken against us, couldn’t really hurt us, at least not physically, unless we let them.

But the problem here is, it is a lot easier to recite that saying, then to live by it. As we grow, we realize that words really are powerful. Our words have the power to encourage, discourage, incite, make us laugh, break our hearts, bring us to tears, soothe a hurting soul, spur our imaginations, etc. Proverbs 16:24 tell us that, *“Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.”* In contrast, Proverbs 15 tells us that, *“a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

As Christians, it is important that we always remember the power of words and what the Bible tells us is their intended purpose. In Ephesians 4:29 we read, *“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”*  Our words are to build up and encourage. Of course, built into that is Biblical correction and admonishment.

Two of the main challenges for us in abiding by this direction are our emotions and our opinions. It seems that when we are involved in conversations that allow us to engage either of those is when we can struggle the most to control our tongues. In today’s world, there are a lot of issues that can cause us to employ both things – sometimes at the same time. Despite that, the Bible’s direction still stands. We must remember that when we speak to those outside of the household of faith, and, maybe more importantly, when we speak to our brothers and sisters, our words are to be purposeful.

In Romans 14, Paul dealt with a situation where believers were getting heavily invested in things he termed as “disputable matters.” These disputable matters were non-essential issues in the Christian life, or “gray areas” for which the Bible did not offer clear direction. Paul’s main point, or warning, we see in Romans 14 is that these types of disagreements cannot ever be allowed to affect Christian harmony and the unity of the church.

As Christians, it is important that we always remember the power of our words and what God’s intended purpose is for our words. Jesus said this of our words in Matthew 12:36-37, *“But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

Your Brother in Christ,

Richard Jay

***From a Woman’s Point of Vie******w***

***JESUS LOVES ME***

A few summers ago, there was a video dance crave and video challenge, **DRAKE** **in My Feelings**, which began with the words, **“KeKe, do you love me?** **Are you riding? Say you’ll never ever leave from beside me…”** In the video, people, young and old, celebrities and just common people, like you and me, would get out of their moving vehicle, sing those words and do a little dance at the same time their hands would form the love symbol, then they would get back inside their vehicle and ride off. We do not know if KeKe ever answered the question or how she responded to the question! During this same time, I saw a church sign online that said, “**KeKe May Not Love You but Jesus Does!!”**

When we were children all of us learned the song, ***Jesus Loves Me*.** Some of the words to the song: **“Jesus Loves Me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so…”** Even though we sing the Bible tells me so, there are no actual scriptures that say these exact words, but there are numerous scriptures in the BIBLE that demonstrate Jesus’ unconditional love for us.

Jesus loves those He came to save. According to **John 3:16-17,** *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved.”* Then too, we know, *“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* **(Luke 19:10)**

We do not have to wonder if Jesus loves us, He is with us, and walks with us daily, His love for us cost Him his life on the cross. He died for you and me. *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us.”* (**Romans 5:8)** *“Christ was the sacrifice for all men. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”* (**Ephesians 5:2)** *“This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an anointing sacrifice for our sins.”* **(1 John 4:10**)

Christ saved us. ***“****But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).”* **(Ephesians 2:4-5)** *“For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.”* **(Matthew 18:11**)

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Christ died for us. *“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”* (**Revelation 1:5)** “*For I delivered**unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”* **(1 Corinthians 15:3)**

We have forgiveness of our sins because of Christ’s love for us. *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”* (**Ephesians 1:13)** *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* **(1 John 1:9)**

**“Yes, Jesus Loves Me, Yes, Jesus Loves Me! Yes, Jesus Loves Me, the Bible tells me so!!”**

Love through Christ,

Margie

FAMILY NEWS



**Congratulations to Tammy, Paul, Max, Macy & Jep**

**on the arrival of Adleigh Ann!!**

**Adleigh was born on Friday, August 21st, weighing 7 lb. 4 oz. & 19.75 inches. We are so happy for this special family!!**