



FAITH matters

February 27, 2023

You may be familiar with a song that Tim McGraw made famous a few years back. Some of the lyrics go like this ... *“Hold the door, say please, say thank you ... Don’t steal, don’t cheat, and don’t lie ... I know you got mountains to climb but always stay humble and kind.”*

The songwriter who wrote those lyrics was a woman named Lori McKenna, and she wrote them as a kind of lullaby to her five young children. She refers to this song as, “a little prayer to my kids.”

Kindness — how important is it?

One of the proudest moments I can remember as a parent occurred when our daughter, Mindy, was in third grade. When Allen and I went in for a parent-teacher conference that fall, the first words out of her teacher’s mouth had nothing to do with academics. Instead Mrs. Magoffin uttered these words, “Your daughter is one of kindest students I have ever had in my classroom. When anyone is struggling, she is the first to offer help. When someone is sitting alone in the lunch room or on the playground, she always goes over to make sure they are all right.”

Kindness — how I’m important is it?

According to the concordance in my Bible there are no fewer than 39 references to *kind, kindhearted, and kindness*. In Paul’s first

letter to the Corinthians, he begin his definition of “love” in this way ... *Love is patient and kind.* I like the coupling of these two adjectives; it feels as though they belong together. After all, both words conjure up quietness. Genuine patience and kindness seldom display themselves with thundering words. They are instead displayed in quiet actions; and you need to be paying attention to witness them. You need to be paying attention to offer them.

We live in a world that we can sometimes assume no longer values kindness. We see so much evidence of its absence all around us — hostility, indifference, intolerance, meanness, selfishness, cruelty. The temptation, of course, is to think that this is something new. The Apostle Paul, this time in his letter to the Ephesians, assures us that it is not. Speaking to Christians of his time and to you and me today he says this, *“Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander as well as all types of malicious behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

~Written by Bonnie Garbrecht



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