

*Acts of Kindness*

We all like to hear warm fuzzy stories that remind us there is still good in the world. Several years ago there was a story in the local paper where we once lived of what one might call a “random act of kindness.” A senior lady was in line at the grocery store when she realized she had left her checkbook at home. The store clerk said they would set her groceries aside so she could go home and get her money. At that point, an individual insisted on paying for her and would not allow the lady to reimburse him. He said it was something he wanted to do. This was not some sort of a debt he was paying back because the two did not know each other. While the rest of the paper talked about political maneuverings, rising gas prices, foreclosure rates and the like, it was very warming to see the good side of things.

Reading of this kindness made me think of James 2:14-18 where we see that our faith is made manifest in our deeds. It is easy to talk a good story. The next step is to live it. I have no idea if the young man paying for the groceries is a Christian but his actions are exactly what the Lord wants from us. As God’s children we should continually show kindness and compassion to all without any kind of prejudice or judgment. This is the kind of example Jesus showed us throughout his life on earth. Never was he fooled or taken by surprise because he knew what was in the hearts of all. He knew there were those such as the Centurion in Matthew 8:5-13 and the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28, neither of whom were Jews, who saw something divine in Jesus and turned to him for help. Of both Jesus said they had great faith. He also knew many others were just plain selfish such as the nine lepers of Luke 17:11-19 or the thousands the Lord fed in John 6. Even knowing what was in the heart of the person, Jesus did not refuse to show his compassion. Colossians 3:12 instructs, “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” If we do this then people will have no foundation to accuse the Christian of being cruel, unloving and unforgiving but will see us as the Lord wants them to see us.

Here is a parting thought: all acts of true goodness we see from others, whether they are believers or not, we see first from God because he is the foundation of good. Our acts of kindness should not be random but evidence of God living in us.