



Some People Aren't Nice!

All too often, we run into someone who isn't nice. What do we do when this happens? Probably try to accept him or her and ignore the bad behavior. Then we feel badly because of how we were treated, but we typically go back for more from this person, or others just like him or her. Some people aren't nice for emotional reasons; others are this way because of far greater problems. How many times have you experienced this? *How many times have you "put up" with someone's bad behavior, resigning yourself to some lofty ideal of perseverance?*

Is the Christian supposed to put up with those who are not nice?



Is he supposed to endure repeated exposures to ill-behaved souls who never seem to understand the "golden rule – do unto others as you would have them do unto you? The Bible has rather pointed advice for Christians caught in this kind of decision-making throe. You may remember this verse from Titus.

Titus 3: 10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

I don't want to focus on the

"heretick" part of this verse; rather on the word "reject." God tells us in a very forthright fashion, that it is okay to reject people given due cause. In other words, if someone's behavior or belief meets a certain criteria, it is okay to have nothing to do with him. Honestly, for most Christians, this might be most difficult, yet necessary. I suppose you have to decide if you're going to become tougher handling issues such as rejecting someone. Who knows? Maybe your well-being may depend on it one day. The bottom line is that once certain Biblical criteria are met, you can reject a person. This is the only time the word "reject" appears in the Bible in this context.

It's a well-observed fact that you

Some People Aren't Nice!

don't often have to deal with "mean" people. Sure, you do encounter some, but, for the most part, most people behave fairly well. *I think God built a "kindness" factor into people, and when we are in our right minds, we behave nicely.* You've seen examples of your enemies helping you when you are down; the world shows us this all the time.

Acts 28: 2 And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

Paul cited this example of kindness, which followed on the heels of a shipwreck. Man has a unique ability to love others, even in hostile situations. That doesn't mean he will always love others in hostile situation; he can though.

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

God asks His Christians to follow this rule of kindness. He expects us to have kind feelings for each other as we walk in love towards each other. He even provides us with the "how" to do this: in honour preferring one another. Selfish people behave contrary to kindness and love; we are to love each other with kindness.

1 Corinthians 13: 4 tells us Charity ... is kind. "Charity" refers to the Christian's required "agape" lifestyle. "Kind" means, "useful to the move of God's Word." This sort of kindness is an absolute Christian requirement; and it is essential to the success of your spiritual well-being.

Ephesians 2:7 tells us "that in the

ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." God is overflowing with kindness for us. What a great standard to follow. Now we are to overflow with kindness to our fellow Christians. In fact, we are supposed to be kind to all people if the situation allows it.

Ephesians 4:32 goes on to state, "and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Actually, it's quite amazing how many "kindness" references exist in the New Testament. Obviously, God places great emphasis on the behavioral characteristic of kindness!

Colossians 3:12 further clarifies the Christian's role of kindness when it says, "put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness..."

Some People Aren't Nice!

2 Peter 1 contains a most forceful behavioral admonition in which, not only kindness is put forth, but also many other behaviors.

Verses 4-8: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brotherly kindness sits adjacent

to godliness. How significant!

Kindness is truly a godly trait supremely expected in our lives by God Himself. How kind are you?

So now, we understand that we are supposed to manifest kindness to others, but what do we do when people aren't kind to us? How do we manage this and still maintain Christian behavior?

Our first key resides in 2 Peter 1:9:

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

If a person refuses to be kind with godliness, he is spiritually blind, cannot see past his nose, and has lost sight of his salvation – forgiveness of sins. This person is truly in a sad state of affairs,

and this person is a Christian too. Now, maybe you can see what I meant, that you won't come across these folks too often, but you will come across them. A person has to be in a very bad way to sink to this level. Therefore, except for one just having a bad day emotionally, when you experience a Christian who isn't living with kindness in his or her life, you now know that he or she has sunk pretty low.

The next verse, verse 10, gives us further instruction on how to manage our lives and behavior.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

How easy it is to become distracted in the midst of emotional turmoil, especially when someone isn't kind to you. But God knows this and gives us this great and insightful instruction. Instead of

Some People Aren't Nice!

focusing on how bad the deliverer of badness is, focus on making sure you understand your calling. Focus on making sure how special in God's eyes you truly are. In other words, build yourself up with God's Word on these two points and you will always be a "survivor," one who shall NEVER FALL. That's very powerful, isn't it! I suppose you have to be fairly selfless to implement this kind of behavior, but you most certainly can. The bottom line as I see it is: *take your mind off the nasty stuff and put it on the godly stuff.* Thinking God's Word in the midst of an abusive situation will most certainly give you the advantage, placing you and your thoughts on High.

1 Corinthians 5: 9-13 provides strength in times when bad behaviors seem out of control. I really love this section because it so clearly delineates the exactness

of how to manage some very troubling situations.

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

Ever since I read the first part of this, I simply could never remove it from my mind. *I felt as if*

I had been thrown a super life saver, something guaranteed to save me in times of serious trouble, and what greater trouble could you be faced with? Sure, you could come up with something, but these listed, nasty qualities definitely top the list! And, this list is limited to Christians who do such things. Isn't that amazing? I love God's sense of humor too. Can you imagine Him crafting these words, just right, tailored just for you and me when He says, "for then must you needs leave the world?" What a hoot! It seems that these problems were destined to be completely rampant in the world, BUT NEVER IN CHRISTIANITY. Christianity cleans up these nasty messes. But every once in a while, along will come the soul who just didn't get the message of abstinence. He or she is still holding onto the worldly ways that God expressly expects us to leave behind. What do you do with this beleaguered soul?

Some People Aren't Nice!

The first thing you don't do is keep company with him or her. Stop hanging out with this person. He is a bad influence. She will eventually take you down. God tells you that you can't invite him over anymore; that you can't go out to lunch with her anymore. I think you'd have fun working each one of these behaviors. It's beyond the scope of this letter for me to do so today, but just by reading them, you can get the general drift: they are bad, nasty, and full of "not nice" activities.

The second thing you are to do is put that person away from you. This means exclude him. Do not allow her into your company. Of course, the first thing that pops into your mind is, but what if they....? I'm not even going to finish the sentence. Stop dodging the Word. The Word is

quite clear for a reason; It knows more than we know; It realizes more than we realize. For starters, *if someone behaves in one or more of these fashions, the depth of their dilemma is far beyond the aid of most very nice Christians.* Sure, if the person was willing to change, you could help, but... There I go again. I'm not even going to finish the sentence. God knows more that we do and we should accept this fact: these kinds of people are to be rejected—period, full stop! No more discussion. Folks, the bottom line is this: *there are people out there, in the Church, who are very nasty.* You can be nice to everyone, and you can be especially wonderful to the household of believers. But if and when you encounter such deliberate behaviors as these listed above, put on your rejection hat. Don't be afraid to turn your back.

You aren't always required to be nice to everyone. And, when you encounter those who aren't nice to you, recognize them for what they really are, and leave them. You'll find out that not nice people always have something else going on, on the inside, something that may not speedily meet the eye, but something that is at the root of why they can't be nice. Stop drowning in your sorrows when someone isn't nice to you. Realize that all people aren't nice; many are though.

Romans 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

When dealing with Christians who aren't nice, recognize nasty behaviors and mark these people. If they meet the criteria of rejection, don't be afraid

Some People Aren't Nice!

to do just that. I've used the term "nice" to enlist a host of behaviors, far too many to enumerate now. There are simply too many flavors of badness to bother, especially when you consider the terms "cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine." These terms capture the primary essence for sure.

Philemon 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

On the other side of the coin, *be sure to "mark" them who exemplify God's Word.* Follow their examples, again, which are too numerous to detail. The world is vast, with many manifestations of darkness. Holy spirit is far greater, with tremendous, multi-variegated grandeurs of goodness and kindness. With this you are filled, made complete, by which you are expected to abide.

That's how you deal with people who aren't nice. You'll be doing both you and the Christian Church a great big favor.

Much love in Christ,

Jerry D. Brown