

Melva's Corner

IT'S JUST NICE TO BE NICE

October 10, 2005

Bible Text: Galatians 5:22-23

Central Truth: God, who is able to do more than we could ever ask or imagine by His power at work within us. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

I recall my grandmother saying, "It's just nice to be nice." Have you noticed that when you speak to people about others that often their first comment is that the person is nice or not so nice?

That made me think. Christians should always be nice. When we meet someone, I doubt that the person we met will later say, "They sure had sound theology." I doubt that they will comment on the deep level of our Bible knowledge. People's first and lasting impression will probably be whether or not we were nice — whether they felt valued and appreciated by this person and whether or not the person was courteous and considerate. If we were to tell them about the atonement or redemption or Jesus being our advocate, they might not understand us. They will, however, remember if we were nice or not.

The apostle Paul describes the fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self - control. **(Galatians 5:22-23)** Do we demonstrate the Spirit's fruit in our lives?

Jesus reminds us, **"A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces."** **(Matthew 12:33 CEV)** If we call ourselves "Christians," the fruit of the Spirit must be seen in our lives.

The older I get, the more I appreciate a person who is nice and kind. With all the stress and adversity in life, a person can refresh our spirit just by being "nice." I especially love it when people are nice under pressure. Even when things get difficult or pressure-filled, these people are still nice. Their life is a wonderful and

powerful Christian witness. The love of Jesus Christ is shining brightly through them.

So, are you nice? When people meet you, you want them to walk away from the experience saying, "They surely are nice!" When your family and co-workers think about you, you want them to say, "Wow, he/she is really nice!"

As we consider all the things we need to share with others in our Christian witness, let's remember that most of it begins with others knowing that we are "nice."

Memory Text:

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." (Romans 8:28 NLT)

"I myself have gained much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because your kindness has so often refreshed the hearts of God's people." (Philemon 1:7 NLT)