

The Amazing Power of Kindness

Most of us put a great deal of time and energy into preparing for Christmas. While New Year's Day is seven days after Christmas, that holiday is not a date most of us spend months preparing to celebrate.

You may be surprised to learn 38.5% of U. S. adults make New Year's resolutions annually. In contrast, 59% of young Americans, ages 18-34 make at least one resolution while those who are over 55 are three times less likely to make a resolution. Parents are over 1.5 times more likely to resolve to change something than their non-parent peers. (reported by insideoutmastery.com)

Research shows that those who make one resolution are more likely to keep it than those who set multiple goals for themselves. I do not want to discourage anyone from making a resolution to eat better, exercise frequently, talk to God more or read their Bible regularly, however, let me suggest a New Year's resolution for those who are not planning to make one.

Why not make a commitment to look for opportunities to be more kind in 2023? In the June 1, 2022, *Our Daily Bread* devotional, Kirsten Holmberg wrote about Glen, a man who buys coffee each morning at a drive-through near his home, and every day pays for the coffee of the customer behind him in line. He even asks the cashier to wish the person a good day.

Glen does not know the person behind him, in fact he has no way of knowing what their response to his kindness will be on any given day. When asked why he practices this kind act of generosity he says it is "the least he can do." However, he never knows whether what he is doing will be taken for granted, encourage the recipient to be more kind to others, or if it could even save their life.

He once learned the power of his kindness when he read an anonymous letter to the editor in his local newspaper. The writer was the unknown person Glen gave a cup of coffee to on July 18, 2017. The person wrote that his gift made them reconsider their plan to take their life later that day and decide to live.

The wise King Solomon spoke of making an impact when he wrote, "Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom." (Ecclesiastes 9:10, NLT) Solomon's point is that we are to do good and be kind while we can.

We never know how God may use our kindness to change someone's life. Glen may never know the details, but hundreds of people have been touched by his generosity and if he also inspires us to be kind and generous, the impact of his actions is truly amazing.