

Deliver Kindness Curbside

“He who follows after righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor” (Prov. 21:21).

“What year is your Cadillac,” he asked curiously.

“I’m not really sure. Would you believe it was a gift!” I said politely, albeit preoccupied while attempting to place my sandwich order in the line at Subway.

Undeterred, he continued, “Well, you know next year they’re coming out with flashers.”

Silence.

“You know, flashers, like the ones you don’t have on right now.”

His words hung in the air somewhere between, “sure, I’d like that toasted,” and, “add extra mayo.” In that split second, I realized he wasn’t interested in my car. He was annoyed.

“These three senior citizens had to walk around your car parked there on the curb and step up because you’re blocking the entrance.”

The three senior citizens he was referring to were himself and two ladies, looking graciously uncomfortable.

I frequent the Subway, just a half-mile down from the church where I work, countless times, not once parking by the door. But that day, I dashed in to grab a sandwich, so I could get back and finish a project. Phone in one hand and wallet in the other, I was a woman on a mission and, well, the curb just seemed quicker than a parking space. In the face of his mild scolding, I felt annoyed and embarrassed. But instead of opting for curt, I was kind. Reaching for kindness was the best moment of my day.

I'm chagrined to admit that far too many times, my drive and deadlines steamroll right over kindness. Reaching for kindness takes strength and self-control. It also takes something that is painfully disappearing from our culture: honor. Honor is defined as a tangible symbol signifying approval or distinction. Honor acts.

"Oh, my goodness," I responded, gently putting my hand on one of the woman's shoulders. "I'm so sorry! I was rushing from work and just didn't even think of how inconsiderate that was. My parents are in their seventies, and I sure wouldn't want someone to do that to them."

I let them know that lunch was on me and thanked them for my gentle, but necessary, lesson. We create a culture of honor when we refuse to argue and resolve to elevate. We don't have to agree with someone to honor them. Reach for kindness—one small decision at a time. Oh, and don't park on the curb.

Editor's Note: On Mondays during June and July, Angela Donadio shares some of her favorite stories from her most recent book, Astounded: Encountering God in Everyday Moments, on Make Life Matter on Charisma Podcast Network. Listen to this episode for more about the power of reaching for kindness and the importance of honor. {eo}

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