

What Type of Harvest Do You Hope to Reap Someday?

What kind of seeds have you planted with your life? What type of harvest do you hope to reap someday? Your harvest and your legacy both lie in the power of the seeds that you plant today.

Kindness is easily planted when the conditions are balmy and pleasant but the vital planting of kindness happens when people are cantankerous, circumstances are annoying and frustration is at an all-time high. It is in those life conditions that kindness will grow a bumper crop!

You choose to plant either seeds of self or seeds of the Holy Spirit. In order to plant the luscious, vibrant and delicious crop of the Holy Spirit, you must hang out with the Holy Spirit. When you die to self and plant the powerful seed of the Holy Spirit in your life and in your heart, then it is a guarantee that the fruit of your life will be delicious! The juice of heaven's abundance will be running down your chin and you will have more than enough to share with the world around you.

"What is desirable in a man is his kindness" (Prov. 19:22).

The day before I began my first year of high school, my mother called me into our living room for a heart-to-heart conversation. These were the words she spoke to me that memorable day and they have echoed into my life although more than four decades have passed:

"Carol, you are about to begin one of the most important seasons of your life. The memories you create and the friendships you make over the next four years will most likely shape your life in ways that nothing else will. Carol, you will not be the most popular girl in the freshman class. You

will not be the most musical, the smartest, the most athletic or the prettiest. But what you can be is the kindest. Make it your No. 1 priority to be the kindest girl in your entire class."

The reason my mother made that life-altering speech to me that day was because her mother had said the exact same words to her the day before she commenced her high school experience. And, as you have probably guessed, I had the exact same conversation with all five of my smart, good-looking, musical, athletic children the day before they began high school.

Determining to plant seeds of kindness will determine the legacy that you produce. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

As you begin to choose to taste like the fruit of kindness, you will soon discover that kindness is always gentle and that gentleness is always kind. It is impossible to have one without the other because kindness is never abrasive, assertive or rough. Neither kindness nor gentleness is a characteristic our culture values or promotes. Our culture has deceived us into believing we should demand our own way, walk over people to get to the top and certainly never allow anyone to push us out of the way. The mentality and emotional strategy that is birthed from the culture in which we live demands we say everything we think, feel and believe.

Kindness, which has always been the strategy of God in a cruel and unkind world, talks like this:

- "How can I serve you?"
- "How can I make your life easier?"
- "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Mic. 6:8).

Perhaps God is sitting you down and speaking into your life today. He is reminding you that of all of the characteristics, gifts, talents and abilities you may possess, it is kindness that is of the utmost importance to Him.

“Do you despise the riches of His goodness, tolerance and patience, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

What an incredible verse! If God’s kindness leads sinners to repentance ... guess what? The kindness you exhibit to difficult and fractious people just may make a difference in their lives as well. When you choose to be identified with the fruit of the Spirit known as simple kindness, you have the potential to change someone else’s life. Your delicious fruit, which comes from the God’s DNA, may lead someone to Jesus and help undo the chains of sin.

Kindness is a powerful piece of fruit.

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women’s conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books: No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a Woman’s Heart and Defiant Joy! Her most recent book, Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire, was released on Aug. 1. Her teaching DVD The Rooms of a Woman’s Heart won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming.