



The Ministry Of Kindness

By Dan Flourney

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:32).

Expressing kindness is such a little thing, yet it means so much. An anonymous writer has well said: “The ministry of kindness is a ministry which may be achieved by all men, rich and poor, learned and illiterate. Brilliance of mind and capacity for deep thinking have rendered great service to humanity, but by themselves they are impotent to dry a tear or mend a broken heart.”

Despite his busy schedule during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln often visited the hospitals to cheer the wounded. On one occasion he saw a young fellow who was near death. “Is there anything I can do for you?” asked the compassionate President. “Please write a letter to my mother,” came the faint request. Unrecognized by the soldier, the Chief Executive sat down and wrote as the youth dictated: “My Dearest Mother, I was badly hurt while doing my duty, and I won't recover. Don't sorrow too much for me. May God bless you and father. Kiss Mary and John for me.” The young man was too weak to go on, so Lincoln signed the letter for him and then added this postscript: “Written

for your son by Abraham Lincoln.” Asking to see the note, the soldier was astonished to discover who had shown him such kindness. “Are you really our President?” he asked. “Yes,” was the quiet answer. “And now, is there anything else I can do?” The lad feebly replied, “Will you please hold my hand? I think it would help to see me through to the end.” The tall, gaunt man granted his request, offering warm words of encouragement until death stole in with the dawn.

If only we could remember that everyone is carrying some kind of burden that kindness could help them bear. How many hearts are aching for a little smile, a little word of encouragement or sympathy. Another anonymous writer penned these words: “Do a deed of simple kindness, Though its end you may not see; It will reach like widening ripples, Down a long eternity!”

Brotherly kindness is one of the “Christian graces” one needs to add to his life in order to make one fruitful in the Lord's service and thus be given an abundance entrance into that eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:5-10). May we learn the lesson of kindness and practice this Christ like quality in our daily lives.