

FAITH COMMENT- 27 Feb 2020 – [by Ann Saunders 01730 300241]

In a world when you can be anything, be kind

Coincidentally, my comment carries on the theme where Jo Hopkins (United Reformed Church) last week finished off... 'be kind, my friends, be kind'.

On my recent visit to a 'celebration' assembly at Sheet Primary School, headteacher Julie Robinson asked the 120 children why they thought a fellow pupil was winning a certificate. One pupil answered, 'Maths', another called out 'English', but no, explained Mrs Robinson, it was for 'kindness'. The word 'kindness' happens to be on the assembly hall's wall with various other words including 'respect' and 'positivity'. How wonderful that the school acknowledges pupils for showing kindness to each other.

In social media it's often the opposite - too much unkindness. Anonymous vile messages on Twitter can ruin lives, and at the worst, as in Caroline Flack's tragic death, can lead to suicide. Her friends warned the paparazzi and trolls, 'Enough is enough', but the latter seem to carry on even after such tragedies. What makes people so vitriolic and hurtful at times? Author Paul Coelho wrote, 'How people treat other people is a direct reflection of how they feel about themselves'.

The Bible says, 'Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit.' Proverbs 15:4. Kindness is one of the fruits of the spirit, hand in hand with two of the others, love and gentleness. Galatians 5.22-23. Jesus preached that when we do anything kind for anyone else, whether visiting someone in prison or tending the sick, we are doing it for him. Matthew 25.35-40.

The poet Wordsworth wrote, '...that best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.'

The good news is there are many acts of kindness, often spontaneous, going on around us and we read in this paper about some of them on the 'letters' page'. Let's keep on doing them however small and follow Sheet Primary School's ethos and example— kindness, respect and positivity —for all.

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