

# ■ Be kind

Back when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a boy entered a coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him.

“How much is an ice cream sundae?”

“Fifty cents,” replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it.

“How much is a dish of plain ice cream?” he inquired.

Some people were now waiting for a table, and the waitress was impatient. “Thirty-five cents,” she said angrily.

The little boy again counted the coins. “I’ll have the plain ice cream.”

The waitress brought the ice cream and hurried away. The boy finished, paid the cashier, and departed. When the waitress came back, she swallowed hard at what she saw. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, was fifteen cents—her tip.

—Author unknown

*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you (Ephesians 4:32 NKJ).*

## Encouraging words ■

By Susan Maycinik (*More Stories for the Heart*)

“Could I speak to the manager?”

My friend’s sudden query to our waitress startled me. Our dinner at a popular pizza restaurant had seemed uneventful, and I wondered what Eileen was up to.

The manager appeared at our table a few minutes later. “What can I do for you?” she asked hesitantly, as if she were expecting yet another reprimand from an angry customer.

“I just wanted you to know that our waitress tonight has really been exceptional,” Eileen began. Then she described several things our server had done that impressed her.

The manager was obviously relieved—and delighted. So was the waitress, who was standing nearby. The four of us laughed and chatted for a few minutes. Eileen had made the day of two hard-working women ... and left an indelible impression on me of the power of positive words.

When we think about our words, it’s easy to focus on the ones we’d like to retrieve. Fortunately, however, there are certain phrases that are almost always the right thing to say—words that communicate love and encouragement. Here are a few:

“You do that really well.”

“How are you, really?”

“What you said helped me.”

“I was wrong.”

“Thanks for leading/serving.”

“Have I offended you?”

“I appreciate the way you...”

“What can I do to help?”

“Tell me about your day (job, kids, etc.).”

“Please forgive me.”

“I’m proud of you.”

“Please come over for dinner.”

“I missed you.”

“I’m so happy for you.”

“I prayed for you today.”

“That must be very difficult.”

“I’ll be glad to!”

In short, if there are words you’d like to hear, it’s a good bet they would encourage others, too.

You may be sorry that you spoke,  
Sorry you stayed or went,  
Sorry you won or lost,  
Sorry that so much was spent.  
But as you go through life you’ll find ...  
You’re never sorry you were kind.

—Herbert V. Prochnow

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