

Kind words go a long way

A soldier recently said to me, chaplain, I heard a beautiful compliment about you the other day but I don't have time to tell you what it was right now. Later on I want to share it with you – okay. But later on seemed like forever. It felt like an eternity from the moment he said he had heard the compliment to the time he shared it with me.

Why did it seem so long? Why did I feel such anxiety? It is because a compliment is a cherished gift; because all of us want to be loved and appreciated; because we have great hunger for an expression of praise and appreciation.

Everyone enjoys hearing kind words. No matter how young we are or how old we become, there is still something good about the pleasure we receive from encouraging words and complimentary remarks of other people. We are especially uplifted when another person look us in the eyes and says – thank you for what you did the other day, or I really appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to help me out!!

There is an inner feeling of acceptance and satisfaction when we hear that someone approves of our appearance, our work, or our contribution to life. But, some of us might say that we don't need verbal recognition from others. However, I submit to you that all of us need affirming words and positive feedback from those close to us and people who work very near to us. The truth is, whether we admit it or not – it feels good when we get compliments.

The problem is - each of us do not always give or get compliments as often as we could or should get them. Some of us live in the shadows of those who appear to do better what we do best. And sometimes it looks like everybody else gets recognized and complimented when we do all the work. For some of us it feels like we do okay but we don't excel at anything. And we start to think that we are extremely common. When compared to others we're not as pretty, not as smart, not as talented, not as well dressed, and not as successful. Yet we have a hunger for praise, a strong need for praise, a strong need for love and appreciation. In fact, people who don't excel probably need compliments more than people who do excel.

Compliments are ways of saying, I care about you and I appreciate you. You are special to me and you are important to all of us. Most of all, you are an integral part of this team. Every individual needs and deserves care, appreciation, acceptance, and approval.

Maybe the golden rule can help us at this point. You remember – “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you”. If we enjoy being appreciated by others, perhaps we should learn to show appreciation for and to those around us.

If words can lift our spirits, we should learn to use them in a manner whereby we can boost the spirits of others. That is exactly what Jesus did. He used compliments frequently and well. He had the uncanny ability to make people feel good about themselves when nobody else did. He knew how to lift individuals' spirits with kind

words and encouraging looks. They enjoyed his company. Jesus has given us an example that we may follow in His steps – even in our complimenting.

Consider the words of 2 Timothy 1: 4-5 that says, “I remember your tears, and I want to see you very much, so that I may be filled with joy...” Think about it. There is probably someone right now who needs to be told of some great contribution he or she has made in your life. If so, tell them.

TO ALL GOLD STAR FAMILIES – THANK YOU FOR A SACRIFICE THAT IS BEYOND COMPREHENSION!!