

Sincere - by Donna Davis

It is interesting to note that there are only 2 verses in Scripture which include the word sincere.

Philp 1v10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; **that ye may be sincere** and without offence till the day of Christ;

1 Pet 2v2 As newborn babes, **desire the sincere milk of the word**, that ye may grow thereby:

That ye may be sincere - Being sincere can be described as being genuine, honest, heartfelt, open, natural, interested, concerned, earnest, real, to have pure intentions, without hypocrisy and deceit.

Only recently I have been thinking how easy it is to fall into the trap of saying the same old things via email and text etc. and giving the same old *pat* answers, comment or statement when receiving news from someone, or when answering/replying to a letter, etc. Being like this, to me, is not being sincere.

We all know how good it is when someone shares an experience or trial and is open about their predicament. They are honest in how they've handled the situation and there is a sense of naturalness in it all. From this we can take strength and encouragement. Surely then, this is how we should be. Be natural and open, genuine and not hypocritical.

On the other hand though it also made me think about the times I have heard a preacher, or read an article or been in a situation where you just know that the person is acting in an unnatural fashion; they are possibly 'saying' all the right things but somehow their speech and heart are not united. They lack interest and this comes across so clearly. They appear not to be real it's as if they are not being honest with themselves.

I wonder how people see me; am I a sincere person? I want to respond to people in the right way, showing concern and a genuine interest, thinking about what I 'say' and really meaning it. So that the person concerned knows they will get a truthful answer out of a loving, caring heart.

I have felt quite challenged about how sincere I am; not only in relation to other people but also regarding my walk with the Lord. We all know that the Lord knows our deepest thoughts and nothing is hidden from Him. The Lord sees the real us and even when we can be seen by others as though everything in our life is in order and we are strong in our faith, He sees straight through it all. He knows about all the struggles and fights we have with our flesh and how we cope with it all. He knows the things that get us down and upset us. He knows our motives for saying and doing things and sometimes this I find difficult; I know I do not always have the right motives.

I thought it interesting, thinking about the verse in 1 Peter that starts with... As newborn babes When you think of a newborn baby, you know they are:-

- Not trying to be someone they're not, they are just 'themselves!'
- They know nothing of sin; they are not deceitful or hypocritical.
- They are genuine – they don't know anything else.
- They are open – they are innocent and have nothing to hide.
- They are also totally reliant on others to look after them; they are in no way independent. They need help!

Therefore maybe this is how we should approach the Scriptures; with this attitude, mind-set and motive. Wanting to be changed and challenged, to be comforted and strengthened, that we might be shaped and fashioned to be more like the Lord and to really love Him. If we **desire the sincere milk of the word**, (Knowing that the word is true, it is straight; it is pure, it deals with real people in real situations, it is 100% truth etc.) and approach the Lord and His word in such a way, perhaps it is then we will grow in our Spiritual life, it is then we feel a real closeness to the Lord and it is then we will be sincere with those we come into contact with; saved or lost!

Jos 24v14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: