

The RIGHT Reply

By Roxanne Switzer
(Based on a true story)



"Kindness begins with me" (Children's Songbook, 145).

"She's so mean!"
Emily crossed her arms and turned away from the family computer.

"Who's so mean?" Mom asked, walking over.

"Kayla. She wrote me a really mean email. I never want to talk to her again."

Kayla and Emily had been friends since second grade. They always used to sit together at lunch and play together after school. But this year things were different. Kayla said mean things about people a lot. It made Emily

feel uncomfortable. She was still nice to Kayla, but they didn't hang out much anymore.

"What did she say in the email?" Mom asked.

"It's still on the screen. You can read it," Emily said, slouching in her seat.

Mom looked at the screen. "You're right. That isn't very nice. I'm sorry she wrote those things to you."

"Why would Kayla say that? I'm always nice to her."

"Sometimes when people are upset they don't say things in a nice way," Mom said.

Emily sat up. "Well, I'm going to tell her how *I* feel!" She

moved her chair back toward the computer and began typing furiously.

A few minutes later Emily said, "There, I'm done." She hovered the mouse over the send button on the screen.

"Maybe you should wait a few minutes before you send it," Mom said. "You can come back when you've cooled down a bit."

Emily took a deep breath and reread the email. Then she leaned back in her chair and sighed.

"OK." She got up from the computer desk and went to the living room, where her brother and sister were playing a game. They invited her to play, but Emily didn't feel like it. She just sat on the couch and watched. Emily couldn't stop thinking about what Kayla wrote and what she had typed to send back.

Emily saw the picture on the wall of Jesus. People were mean to Jesus a lot, but He was never mean back. He showed patience and love to everyone. As she thought about Jesus, Emily felt calm. She knew what to do.

Emily walked back to the computer and sat down. She deleted what she had written and started over. This time she typed a short, kind reply. It told how she felt, but it wasn't mean.

Emily called Mom back to the computer. "How's this?" she asked, pointing to the screen.

Mom read the words and smiled. "How do you feel about it?"

Emily clicked the send button. "I feel better now," she said. "The first email I wrote wasn't very nice. I'm glad I didn't send it."



"I'm glad too," Mom said. "Do you know why you feel better?"

"Because I followed Jesus," Emily answered. "I think the Holy Ghost is telling me I replied in the right way!" ●

The author lives in Indiana, USA.



One day at school I asked a girl if she wanted to sit by me. She told me to go away! I wanted to say something mean too, but instead I thought, *What would Jesus do?* My reply was, "It's OK. I'll sit by someone else." It felt good to act like Jesus and follow in His footsteps.

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