



BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER: WEEK 4

Welcome to our study on what it means to be **kind** to one another. We'll be using Ephesians 4:32 as our theme and memory verse, which is: "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God is Christ also forgave you." Ladies, kindness is sort of a hard word to define. Sure, it basically means to be friendly, generous, and considerate, but honestly, it's so much more than that. In the Bible it also refers to "being good and doing no harm." Depending what translation you have, the word "kindness" is in the Word about 50 times. The word kind or kindness covers a broad range of meaning in English, Hebrew, and Greek. The world's definition is usually based on tolerance and simply "being nice" to everyone, but Biblical kindness is much deeper than that. In fact, the word "nice" isn't even in the Bible. Kindness doesn't mean we don't stand for what we believe in, nor is it incompatible with courage. Barry H. Corey, in his book, Love Kindness, wrote, "Kindness embodies courage, although courage does not always embody kindness. Too often our centers are firm on conviction, but our edges are also hard in our tactics. This way is characterized by aggression. And on the other hand, there's the way of 'niceness.' Whereas aggression has a firm center and hard edges, niceness has soft edges and a spongy center. Niceness may be pleasant, but it lacks conviction. It has no soul. Niceness trims its sails to prevailing cultural winds and wanders aimlessly, standing for nothing and thereby falling for everything. Niceness is cosmetic. It's bland. Niceness is keeping an employee in the job, knowing he's no longer the right fit, but failing him and the company because you don't have the courage to do the right thing. Kindness calls you to tell him he's not the person for the job and then dignify him in the transition."

Kindness is also hard to define because it is demonstrated in so many ways, usually through another one of the “**one anothers**.” Kindness extends grace and mercy and forgiveness. Kindness shows compassion to others, is generous, loves their enemy, helps others when it can, and speaks with grace. Kindness reflects a compassionate and selfless attitude towards others, is much more than good deeds, and is always rooted in love. Kindness, at its core, seeks to show love and compassion to others. This is going to be a fun study. Spend some time working on your memory verse, pray, and let’s go!

1. Before we talk about human kindness, let’s take a look at the kindness of God. Read the following verses and write what they say about “kindness.” Isaiah 54:8, 63:7, Titus 3:4-5, Ephesians 2:7, and Psalm 31:21.
2. Kindness is an attribute of God. Why is it so important to be a reflection of His character? How would living a life of kindness glorify Him?

If we want to be imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1), we must be kind, or else we are guilty of misrepresenting Him. Ouch.

3. Read Galatians 5:22. What does this verse say about kindness? Do you think kindness comes naturally? Why or why not? (Read Psalm 14:3 and Romans 2:12 for help.)

The prophet Micah (Micah 6:8) tells us to love kindness, do justly, and walk humbly with our God. Walking in kindness is the Biblical way of living. Paul tells us that kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. It's a result of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. After we've inhaled the Spirit, we exhale kindness, so to speak. It's not humanly natural, but it's a natural fruit birthed by the Spirit in a life that is committed to following Him. I love this definition: Kindness is an outward expression of one's inner disposition and relationship with God.

4. Random acts of kindness have become a “thing” in our culture, a movement, actually. There’s even a “Random Acts of Kindness Day.” How does this differ from the Biblical view of kindness as shown in the paragraph above?
5. How should kindness be reflected in our speech? See Prov 31:26, Ephesians 4:29, Psalm 19:14, and Colossians 4:6. What do they tell us? Are you one to use kind words or are you a bit “spicy”? Why are our words so important in being a witness in this world?
6. Also read James 3:3-12. What does he say about our speech?
7. We’ve all heard that actions speak louder than words, and it’s true, at times. But how do hurtful and careless words speak louder than insincere kindness?

8. I read this question somewhere and it really made me think. “What do you think is the difference between ‘unwholesome talk’ and speech that involves ‘bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, and slander’? Do we ever dismiss one kind over another?” (Ephesians 4:29-32)
9. Read the words of Jesus in Luke 6:35. What else does He tell us about kindness? How do we practically do this?
10. We see another aspect of kindness in Proverbs 3:27. What does this verse tell us?
11. How does caring for those who are vulnerable show kindness? How does that reflect God’s heart for love and justice as well?
12. How do forgiveness and grace reflect God’s kindness?

13. We've already looked at the command to "love our neighbor." How does kindness embody that command? Read the Good Samaritan story in Luke 10:25-37. As the Samaritan loved his enemy, list some demonstrations and examples of kindness you find in that story.

14. As we walk through the Gospels, we see Jesus demonstrating kindness over and over by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and loving the unlovable. Find a story that you think is a good example of the kindness of Jesus and write a summary of it and how kindness was shown.

15. Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13. How did David show kindness? What can we learn about David from this text? What can we take away for ourselves?

16. Paul mentions two random acts of kindness that were shown to him in Acts 27:3 and 28:2. What were they?

I love this quote by Ed Stetzer in the forward of Barry Corey's book. He wrote, "You can't hate a people and reach a people at the same time. So, in moments like this, when culture is changing and many Christians are angry, we need wise and kind believers to show us a better way." Bryan Loritts wrote, "The changes in our culture are breathtaking: escalating racial tension and questions of gender identity, equality, and rights, along with much more, present us with a unique moment in history to be voices of grace and truth in the marketplace. Shouting or silence are not the paths to influence. Instead, we need a third way, the way of kindness."

17. In our culture today, how is kindness a "better way"? (Not "niceness" but kindness.) Write your thoughts about the quotes above.

18. Although kindness is a fruit of the Spirit, it's a deliberate and intentional choice to daily live and love kindness. Jim Daly wrote, "Kindness is a key that can unlock many closed doors and change the world for God's glory." Can you explain what he means?

19. How does walking in kindness as a lifestyle take humility?

20. The greatest act of kindness is mentioned in two verses, John 3:16 and Romans 5:8. What do they say and how is kindness demonstrated??

Romans 2:4 tells us that the kindness (or goodness) of God leads us to repentance. His kindness is intended to lead us to run from sin. Because He's kind, He's patient. We don't deserve His grace, but He gives it to us freely. Oh, how grateful and thankful we should be! His loving-kindness (Hesed/Chesed) is the idea of faithful love in action. He demonstrated that to us on the cross.

21. Kindness can also be described as "love in action." Let's take a kindness litmus test, shall we?

- a. How generous are you? Would you say you live a generous life?
- b. Do you have trouble with forgiveness or showing mercy?
- c. Are you kind, even when you don't feel like being kind?
- d. Are you kind to your enemies or those you don't know?
- e. Are you hospitable, another demonstration of kindness?
- f. Do you have a compassionate and selfless attitude towards others?

That's all for today ladies. I've included something I found in my notes that I really liked. It's called **House Rules for God's Family**. They are full of **one anothers** to practice within our own families, as well as with each other. Look them over, pray over them, and then practice them! Maybe hang them on your frig!

House Rules for God's Family

1. Be at peace with one another (Mark 9:50)
2. Love one another (John 13:34)
3. Be joined to one another (Romans 12:5)
4. Be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10)
5. Honor one another (Romans 12:10)
6. Rejoice with one another (Romans 12:15)
7. Weep with one another (Romans 12:15)
8. Live in Harmony with one another (Romans 12:16)
9. Accept one another (Romans 15:7)
10. Counsel one another (Romans 15:14)
11. Greet one another (Romans 16:16)
12. Agree with one another (1 Cor. 1:10)
13. Wait for one another (1 Cor. 11:33)
14. Care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25)
15. Serve one another (Galatians 5:13)
16. Carry one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
17. Be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
18. Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32)
19. Submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21)
20. Bear with one another (Colossians 3:13)
21. Teach, admonish one another (Colossians 3:16)
22. Encourage one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
23. Build up one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
24. Spur one another on to good works (Hebrews 10:24)
25. Offer hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9)
26. Minister gifts to one another (1 Peter 4:10)
27. Be humble toward one another (1 Peter 5:5)
28. Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)
29. Pray for one another (James 5:16)
30. Fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7)

