

Youth group @ Home

Sunday 24th May 2020

Christian Character – Session 6: Being Kind

Good morning and welcome to session 6 of Youth Group @ Home. Each week we are going to look at a different element of what builds Christian character. Last week we looked at being Joyful, this week we are going to explore how we can be more kind. Why not go through today's session with family or friends? You could always Zoom call some friends and go through the activities together.

Activity

Put the famous people below in order of how kind you think they were/are. With the most kind person at number 1, down to the least kind at number 10. Don't worry, there isn't a specific order that is thought of as right or wrong, this is just to get you to think about kindness.

				
Mother Teresa	Princess Diana	Adolf Hitler	Henry VIII	Bill Gates

				
Ed Sheeran	Jeremy Kyle	Queen Elizabeth II	Kim Jong-un	Tom Hanks

Think

What is kindness? Think about a couple of times that you have been on the receiving end of kindness. How did it feel? How would you feel different if you hadn't been shown that kindness?

Many people think that to be kind takes big acts, for example some of the famous people above are kind through giving money to worthwhile causes. But God says that the smallest acts of kindness are important in our everyday lives. In Matthew 25:35-40 Jesus said:

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

Finally, read the story below from well known Christian speaker Tony Campolo, an incident that actually happened to him:

Tony Campolo was headed to work along his usual route. It wasn't unusual for him to pass a number of homeless people on the way. Occasionally they would blurt out requests for money. And generally he ignored them. But one day a particular 'bag' lady, whom he had seen often before in his mad dash to get from A to B, came shuffling-by holding a steaming cup of coffee from a local donut shop. Their eyes met. He forced a smile. She stopped and put down her dishevelled coat and bags. "Hey, mister, would you like a sip of my coffee?" Now, if you were Tony, how would you respond? Walk past, quickly, right? Well, he did. Or at least started to. Something inside stopped him on that frosty morning. Half a block down the street he turned around. "Hey lady! Yes, yes I would like a taste of your coffee." And she stuck out her dirtied hand to him, and he swallowed...what had to be the most delicious coffee he had tasted in a long time. "Isn't it good?" she inquired.

"Yeah, this IS good. And thank you."

"You're welcome."

"Hey lady... why did you offer me your coffee?"

"Because it was so good. I thought someone might like to share it with me and enjoy it, too." There in the middle of a cold Pennsylvanian morning, an angel in disguise exhibited the fruit of the

Spirit called Kindness. Sharing from what little she had with someone whom she simply thought might enjoy the pleasure she was experiencing from her cup of coffee.

Kindness. It can be shown in big ways or small. However big or small, 'kindness' makes an impact; we can all vouch for that.

Bible Study

Now grab your bibles or your phones to look up the passage we are looking at today. Find and read Titus 3:3-5 and then answer the following questions:

- What kindness has God shown human beings?
- How did God's kindness appear?
- What difference has God's kindness made?

God saw a world full of hurt, brokenness and despair. He saw people with no hope of breaking free from pain and suffering. And so he sent Jesus as our rescue. Kindness is the ability to recognise the needs of others and respond to them. Kindness is understanding and compassion.

God, who has shown the world complete 'Kindness', wants his people – Christians – to be like him. He wants to shape us into his character a bit like you can do with playdoh. He wants us to become more like Jesus. And one of the characteristics God wants to see develop in us is kindness.

Read Galatians 5:22-23... Here we see that kindness is bound strongly to love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Each of the characteristics listed speaks about putting others first before ourselves, giving our best to others and following Jesus' example, as these characteristics are important to God.

A couple of weeks ago we read the story of the good Samaritan, in this story there is a very good example of kindness shown by the Samaritan. Jesus was telling this parable to Jews and at the time Jews had a well known hatred for the Samaritans so it would have been an incredible act of kindness for the good Samaritan to help the injured Jew in the story. It would be like a biker from one gang stopping to help a biker from a different, rival gang when he was injured in modern times.

Think

Rank how kind or unkind you have been to the following groups of people over the past week, 1-10 (10 being amazingly unbelievably kind, 1 being totally mean and extremely unkind): (This is a private reflection, you don't need to tell anyone.)

- Parent
- Brother/sister
- Friend
- Neighbour
- A stranger
- Someone you can't stand

Now try and list at least one kind thing you could do for each of the following people:

- Parent
- Brother/sister
- Friend
- Neighbour
- A stranger
- Someone you can't stand

What might be the result of your kindness to each person? Write down what effect an act of kindness might have on these people.

- How would that make you feel?
- How do you think God would feel?

Remember

Here are some key points for you to remember:

- 1) Kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit meaning as we spend more time with God we take on more of his character and become more like who he has designed us to be.
- 2) God said that when we do even the smallest of kind deeds for another person we are doing his work in showing part his kind character to those around us in the world. Kindness can be shown in many different ways: when we simply help someone reach the top shelf in the supermarket, visiting someone when they are unwell or getting something to eat or drink for someone who needs it.
- 3) It can be hard to remain kind if people around us don't show us the same kindness back but we must remember that God will be pleased and will reward us in heaven. He also calls us to be especially kind to those who treat us badly because that is what will make us stand out as Christians amongst others. But remember God doesn't leave us on our own to do this, he will build our kindness as we rely on him and being kind to everyone will become more natural.

Prayers

Spend a few moments thinking of any situations where you would like to experience God's kindness in our lives.

Now think of people you know who are going through a tough time and need to experience God's kindness in their lives.

As we come to the end of our session, let's take some time to pray for everyone we know who is in a difficult situation currently.

Let's ask God to help us to grow closer to him to experience his joy in our own lives.

Dear God,

We thank you that you give us these gifts of the spirit and work within us to mould us, as we grow closer to you, to be more like you.

We pray for those who we know who are struggling at the moment, who could do with experiencing your kindness in their lives. (name a couple of people you know personally)

We pray for those struggling because of this time of lockdown, people can often become resentful when they can't do everything that they want at the current time. Give them contentment in their individual situations and help people not to become unkind but to be looking forward to those times when things will improve.

We pray for people who feel let down by times when we haven't been as kind to them as we should have been (you may want to pray for a specific situation) Please help them to forgive us, and please

help us to be forgiving to those who we feel haven't been kind to us, help us not to hold grudges and treat everyone kindly regardless of any history we have with them..

We pray for the situations in our lives at the moment that we want to experience God's kindness, where we are struggling to stay positive (You could talk to God about your own personal situations).

Please God, lead us and guide us. Help us to remember that you are always with us and love us no matter what.

Amen.

Remember, you can pray anytime – day or night – God is always listening to you and He loves to hear your voice.

We really hope you enjoyed this session (if you managed to stay away from that sweet, well done, you may eat it now!). If you have questions you want to ask, or want to request a certain topic for a future session, you can email me: Freya@Bedhampton.Church.