



Leader's Guide

October 9 & 10: Intentional Kindness

Series Overview

We are in this world to make an impact and love others. If we are going to truly impact our world, we must display the life of Christ in our own lives. *Galatians 5:22-23* says, ²²*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* This kind of life will make a difference in our world and in the lives of the people around us.



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Sermon Highlights

God forged a friendship between David and Jonathan even though their situation should have made them bitter rivals. They both realize that David will be the next king but Jonathan's family will undergo a great deal of turmoil because of this situation.

In *1 Samuel 20*, Jonathan makes an appeal to David, v.13-16, ¹³*But if my father is inclined to harm you, may the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away safely. May the LORD be with you as he has been with my father.*

¹⁴*But show me unfailing kindness like that of the LORD as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, ¹⁵and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth. ¹⁶So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD call David's enemies to account."*

In ancient times, goodness indicated a morally upright person. Some theologians believe kindness is the display of moral goodness. Goodness is who you are on the *inside*. Kindness is the *outward* expression of that inner goodness.

David remembered Jonathan and showed kindness to his crippled son, Mephibosheth. David could have ordered that he be put to death, but instead he had him eat every single meal at the king's table. He showed intentional kindness.

Practical ways to be intentionally kind:

1. **Be kind to family and friends.**
2. **Be kind to someone who cannot repay.**
3. **Be kind when it is not deserved.**

Lesson 1: Relationships matter more than riches.

Lesson 2: You are Mephibosheth. (And so am I.)

David is a prototype of our King, Jesus Christ. He will welcome us into His eternal palace one day. We will eat at His banquet table. We all walk with a limp ... we are disabled by sin, frightened by guilt. We have no way to repay His grace, but His grace is greater than our sin!

The only thing that really matters is your relationship with the King!

On kindness...

- A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love. –Basil the Great
- *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.* –Ephesians 4:32
- Kindness is in our power, even when fondness is not. –Samuel Johnson



Take it home ... Practical Applications

Ask God to bring somebody into your life who could use some intentional kindness. Prayerfully look for ways that you can show kindness that may not be repaid or even deserved. Ask God to touch that person's heart through simple acts of kindness.



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: What is the most surprising act of kindness that you ever experienced? How did it impact you?

Opening Thought

Acts of intentional kindness can have a tremendous impact on any of us. Most people have been touched in some way by an act of kindness that wasn't deserved or expected. Use this time to share stories and begin to see just how powerful kindness can be as a way of reaching people who seem unreachable.

Read **2 Samuel 9:1-13**.

1. Even in the place of political victory, David remembers his past covenant with Jonathan. What are some ways you can remember past relationships and the kindnesses that have been shown to you?
2. What are some things that can cause you to forget past kindnesses or promises that you made to others?
3. What would be your reaction if you were Mephibosheth? What does this series of events tell us about David?
4. What does this story say to us about God's grace and undeserved kindness from Him?

Key Point

Kindness requires commitment. It may seem like the time for reaching out to somebody has passed, but kindness is timeless. Kindness means that we keep looking for ways to show love and grace to people even if they are not expecting it. The key to this story is that God keeps reaching out to us and showing us kindness, grace and forgiveness. David's kindness to Mephibosheth shows us that God keeps pursuing us with His love and kindness.

Read **Ephesians 4:32** and **Colossians 3:12**.

1. What is the connection between compassion and kindness? Why are both equally important?
2. How can you *clothe* yourself with kindness? What are some practical ways to do that?
3. Why can kindness be such a strong testimony to the love of God in our current society?
4. Can you think of three people in your personal world that are in need of kindness? What are some ways you or your small group can reach out to them?

Key Point

No single characteristic stands by itself in the Christian life. Goodness and kindness are linked. Goodness is on the inside and kindness is the outward expression of that inner goodness. Compassion is the concern we have for others, and that compassion motivates us to display kindness. As the fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives, the different spiritual qualities work together to cause us to be more like Christ. All of these working together can be a testimony that shows the love of God in a way that changes a person's heart. Help your group to think about practical ways that they can show kindness to people in need of God's love.

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and 2 Peter 1:5-9.

1. How do goodness and kindness work together in your spiritual life? How do you cultivate inner goodness? How can that be displayed by outer kindness?
2. Do you see any pattern to the various qualities that Peter lists? How do these spiritual traits build upon each other?
3. Why does Peter say we should have these spiritual qualities in increasing measure? Where do you see the most spiritual growth in your own life?
4. Where do you see need for more growth in your own life? What practical things can you do to develop a greater sense of the fruit of the Spirit in your life?

Key Point

All of us should be growing in our spiritual development. This will be evident through the lives that we lead and the things we do that effect others. Help your group to see that impacting others occurs more naturally as we continue to grow in our relationship with God and in our Christian character. As the fruit of the Spirit grows, we are able to impact our world in ways that we would never have expected.

Notes...



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All Bible references are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

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