



THE Heart
OF Kindness
#KINDNESSFLOOD

Welcome to The Heart of Kindness

Hello! Before you dig into this series, we want to thank you for downloading this series. It is our prayer that this series will be helpful to you and your ministry. We enjoyed creating this little something.

Inside this packet are four different lessons for four different weeks. Each lesson is written by one of the four of us, using our own style and wording – you'll probably notice some similarities and differences. One thing we ask: please don't use our work without any study of your own. These lessons are not meant to do all the work for you. These lessons will work best when you incorporate your own wordings and nuances.

Now, enjoy the series! And let's flood the world with kindness!

Andrew, Philip, Jody, and Will



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Andrew Jenkins

Andrew Jenkins is the youth minister at the Woodson Chapel Church of Christ. Andrew and his wife Kadee have a daughter named Mamie Grace. He co-hosts The YM Podcast, serves on the Board for Adventures In Ministry, and serves as the Chairman of the Youth Worker Committee for AIMCON.

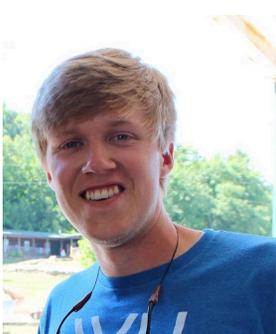
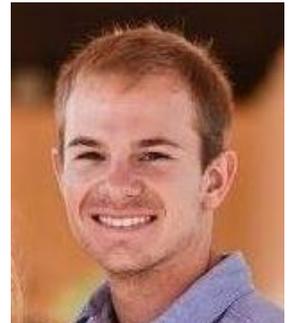


Philip Jenkins

Philip Jenkins is the youth minister at the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ. He and his wife Laura have two kids named Lucas (6) and Holley (5). Philip is the chairman of the board of Evangelism University and has authored two books, The Lunch Ladies and Take Route.

Jody Marble

Jody Marble grew up in Oklahoma then attended Freed-Hardeman University in 2010. He's been in Tennessee ever since. He has worked with the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ and is now the youth minister at the Bartlett Woods Church of Christ, where he and his wife Katie have been since 2016.



Will Harrison

Will Harrison grew up in north Alabama, graduated from the University of Alabama, and is now working as the youth minister in residence at the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ. He and his wife Jennah have been married and living in Mt. Juliet since the summer of 2017.



WEEK 1 – MILE 1 vs. MILE 2

by Andrew Jenkins

WEEK 1 - MILE 1 vs. MILE 2

class prep

- Find a few volunteers to participate in the IceBreaker before class begins.
- Follow [@TheHeartOfKindness](#) on Instagram.
- Read Matthew 5. Read Romans 12:9-21.
- Find a story or two about Mile 2 Kindness

remind your students

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heart of the matter

Most everyone would say that they are kind, but what sets Christian kindness a part from the rest of the world?

Verses: Matthew 5:40-42 and Romans 12:9-10

icebreaker ideas

Before you get to class plant a few students and/or volunteers that will go above and beyond in being kind to everyone else in the room tonight. Ask them to read Romans 12:10, "...outdo one another in showing honor..." and follow what it says.

Transition:

Somebody tell me, was there a different feel in the room tonight? How did it feel to be treated with so much attention? Did you feel the kindness tonight that flooded the room?

Tonight, I had a few people read this verse in Romans 12 and verse 10. "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." You could really replace that word "honor" with the word "kindness" and the verse would have the same meaning. What would the world look like if everyone lived by that verse?

lesson

Ask just about anybody you know if they are kind, and most likely their answer will be, YES. We all know kind people that are both Christians and non-Christians. So when the Bible talks about being kind, what is God talking about? What sets us a part from just anyone else? What looks different about godly kindness?

Well, that is the question we are going to be asking throughout this series, that we are calling the Heart of Kindness. We will be attempting to get down to the true meaning of



kindness...getting to the Heart of Kindness. This is a series that is being done by groups all over the country right now. People that are wanting to answer the same question.

So let's start there...what is kindness? It's a word that is sort of hard to define with words. In fact, Webster even has a tough time defining it without using the word kind. Webster defines kindness as the quality or state of being kind; a kind deed. To which I say, thanks Webster (sarcasm)!

But as hard as kindness is to define with words; most of us recognize kindness when we see it. In fact, if you look around you everyday you will see acts of kindness that are being done.

Chick-fil-a has a value that they teach their employees that I love called Second Mile Service. It probably doesn't surprise you that this value comes from a Bible verse found in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:41. In this verse Jesus is talking about how we should treat others and more specifically about how we should react when it comes to retaliation. Second Mile Kindness is what we wanna talk about tonight.

In Matthew chapter 5, Jesus uses the phrase "you have heard that it was said" 5 times. And I can't help but think that what Jesus was trying to do was unravel what the world had been teaching people to do and replacing that teaching with something much deeper and more meaningful. So in Matthew 5:38-42, Jesus is saying, "You have heard, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth...but I tell you...if anyone forces you to go one mile go with him two miles.'"

And what I think Jesus is really teaching here is this: Don't give people what you think they deserve...give them more! That doesn't mean if they knock out one of your teeth, that you should knock out all of their teeth. But rather, don't repay them with what the world says...give them something more, something different.

When Jesus's audience would have heard this they would have immediately associated it with the Roman law that said a Roman citizen or soldier could compel a subject from one of the conquered lands of Rome to carry his backpack, or load, for him for one mile, but one mile only. But here Jesus takes it a step further and says, "...go the second mile also."

Jesus was telling his audience to do what was required of them and then do more. I believe, Jesus would say that is true, godly kindness. Mile 2 Kindness.

You see Mile 1 was motivated by law. It was exactly what was required or expected. Anyone can go the first mile and do what is expected of them... but Christian kindness is found in the second mile.

The second mile is the mile that is motivated by something other than law or just what is expected. Look back with me at Romans 12 and lets read our theme verse for this series.

Romans 12:9-10.



“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor (or kindness).”

Anyone catch what mile 2 kindness is driven by?

Love. But not just any love...genuine love, real love, authentic love. Love that comes from somewhere different. Mile 2 Kindness is motivated by the love for Christ. We do what is expected then we love them. Mile 2 is always motivated by love. And it is in this mile that people see something different, something more...Jesus.

It is when we outdo others in showing honor, love and kindness that people are pointed to Jesus. Jesus said it this way in John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciple, if you have love for one another.”

In going the second mile you are pointing others to Jesus. But you also need to know this...you cannot travel the second mile without influencing others. It only takes one second miler to change the environment. It only takes one second miler in your school to change your class. Imagine the surprise of a Roman soldier if someone would have continued to carry his pack instead of just dumping the pack and spitting on the ground and huffing their breath and walking away. It would have been shocking, but something that would have made a huge impact on that Roman.

Imagine the influence you could have if you decided to show Mile 2 Kindness to all those around you.

discussion questions

Q: Share a story/example about Mile 1 Kindness. Now share a story/example of Mile 2 Kindness (Something you saw, something you heard, etc.)

Q: What major differences do you see in Mile 2 Kindness?

Q: Why is it a must that Mile 2 Kindness be motivated by love?

Q: Do you agree that Mile 2 Kindness is contagious? If so, what makes Mile 2 Kindness so contagious?

Q: What can you do this week to show Mile 2 Kindness to those around you? Get specific and think about each person in your life (family, friends, teachers, random people that cross your path, etc.).



WEEK 2 – REVENGE vs. MERCY

by Philip Jenkins

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icebreaker

The Power is Yours!

introduction

* Get out your phone and use this illustration.

Maybe you can picture a person like this because you know someone like this, or maybe you can't, but as we begin tonight, I want you to close your eyes and picture the meanest, most obnoxious, most annoying, bully that you have ever met in your entire life. Just the biggest jerk you've ever met. They go out of their way to make you miserable. They boss you around. They make fun of you. They've stolen from you. I mean, this person is evil.

They have bullied you in person. They have bullied you online. They have posted stuff about you in their Snapchat story. They have made up lies about you. They have made it their personal mission to cause you pain. They hate you.

And lo and behold, as fate would have it, she has lost her phone. She has no idea where it is. And it just so happens that you stumble upon it. You pick it up and realize, “She doesn't have a passcode on this thing.”

And here you sit in an interesting position, with all of this power at your fingertips. You literally have her life in your hands. I mean you can destroy her.

You're not sure what to do, but as you're thinking this over, you decide to look through her phone. Man, there's some juicy stuff in here. I mean, really incriminating stuff. Some reputation-ruining type of stuff.

But I mean, the stuff that she says about her parents. The photos on her phone. The things she is saying about people behind their backs. The friends that has been backstabbing.

It's all here. Right in your hands.



All it would take is a few screen shots. A few texts sent her and there. A few posts on social media and this person would be absolutely destroyed.

So what do you do? Like for real. Not “What’s the best Bible class answer I could give?” I mean, what would you do? I mean, this is your enemy. This person has brought a lot of pain into your life. And now’s your chance to make them pay.

With that image in mind, I want you to turn to 1 Samuel 24:1-22.

review

Last week, we kicked off a new series called “The Heart of Kindness.” True kindness is hard to find, but if you could get an idea or a look at the heart of kindness, what does it really look like?

If we want to understand the heart of kindness, all we really have to do is look at the heart of Jesus, and last week we looked at the passage where Jesus talks about going the second mile. Most everybody does the polite thing and goes the first mile. But what about mile 2?

So last week was Mile 1 versus Mile 2. As we continue our study tonight, we will look at the idea of “Revenge VS Mercy.”

a look at 1 Samuel 24

Let’s pick up in 1 Samuel 24:1.

When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, “Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.” 2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats’ Rocks. 3 And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself.

Ok. Some stuff happening here. Saul, the king of Israel, is seeking to kill David. He receives a tip that David and his men are camping at Engedi, he takes 3,000 Israelite men on a manhunt, and he cuts a trail towards David’s vicinity.

Saul takes a bathroom break, and he ducks into a nearby cave to relieve himself. (Not that you really needed or wanted to know this, but he’s probably going number two, as we will see in just a minute. Maybe he’s whistling, too...at least he is in my mind.)

Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave.

(The Bible doesn’t say this, but I wonder if it left out the phrase “trying not to laugh.”) Look what happens next.

4 And the men of David said to him, “Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, ‘Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.’”



This isn't the main point in the lesson but we don't need to miss an important text message here: we must be careful to listen to God instead of people. Sometimes people can make things sound really good—maybe even make certain things sound right.

"Look David! Look what the Lord has done! Not only has God delivered you from the hand of Saul thus far, now he's brought your enemy right here into your hand. This is the day that the Lord himself said, "Hey! Go ahead and take the life of Saul!"

"Look! Here's her phone. Look what the Lord has put into your hands! Go ahead and take your shot! I mean, clearly it's God's will for you to take that phone and ruin your enemy!"

And so here you are thinking about this rather unique opportunity. Here's David thinking about this rather unique opportunity. Is it really God's will for David to take Saul's life? Is it really God's will for you to ruin that person's life?

Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 5 And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 6 He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed."

It's a far cry from taking Saul's life, but David feels really guilty about what he's done. We'll say more about his response in just a minute.

7 So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.

8 Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage. 9 And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your harm'? 10 Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the Lord gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. [c] I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.' 11 See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. 12 May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you. 13 As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you. 14 After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! 15 May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."

What did David do to show his heart to Saul?

1. He came out of hiding.
2. He called Saul his lord the king.
3. He bowed to him out of respect.



4. Called Saul his father.
5. Shows Saul the robe swatch as a sign of his loyalty and his pure intentions.
6. Refers himself a dead dog.

Needless to say, David humbles himself before his king, Saul. Let's see how it goes over.

16 As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17 He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. 18 And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the Lord put me into your hands. 19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. 20 And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 Swear to me therefore by the Lord that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house." 22 And David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Saul realizes what has happened and his heart is broken.

I've found that when I keep my cool and do my best to gracefully handle a situation where someone has acted like a jerk, there usually comes a moment where the offender realizes what they have done, feels sorry about it, and wants to make it right. And they will usually thank you for the way you handled the situation. It doesn't always happen this way, but when it does it certainly has a way of bringing peace back into the situation.

On the other hand, I've been a part of situations where the person didn't feel sorry at all for what they did and they just went on to cause more drama. Situations like that are anything but peaceful.

As we draw to a close, I want to call attention to what this story teaches us about the heart of kindness.

#1 True kindness is about loving my enemy.

Last week we studied the words of Romans 12:14,17-21, but they fit so well here that we need to mention them again. As we read this passage, think of how well David handled this situation with Saul...

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it[i] to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



As you look back over that passage, every bit of it fits David to a T. True kindness is about loving my enemy.

#2 True kindness is about recognizing my real enemy.

There's something interesting that you might've missed when we read this story through a minute ago about Saul and David.

In verse 4, how do David's men refer to Saul?

In verse 19, how does Saul refer to himself?

In verses 6-14, how does David refer to Saul? He calls him the Lord's anointed. His lord. The king. His father.

David's men were confused about the enemy. Even Saul himself was confused about his enemy (he thought it was David). But David didn't view Saul as the enemy.

You know what if we started seeing people the way that David viewed Saul? Saul may have been a broken, paranoid, flawed man. He may have become the villain, but to David, Saul was still the Lord's anointed.

What if instead of seeing people's flaws, and instead of being so quick to point out all of the things that people are not, we started seeing people as those made in God's image?

Sometimes it's easy to pick a fight with the wrong enemy, but as Christians we've got to see who the real enemy is. It's not a person, even though people can be evil sometimes. Politics and politicians are not the enemy. Even terrorists are not our enemy.

People are not the enemy. People are people with souls. The enemy is the enemy, and the enemy wants to destroy souls.

Let's spend our time wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against our enemy's kingdom of darkness. (Ephesians 6:12)

#3 True kindness is about repaying evil with good.

In verses 17-19, Saul says, "I have repaid you evil. You have repaid me with good. Now May the Lord reward you with good."

Life is not about taking revenge. It's not about destroying your enemy or kicking someone when they are down. It's about showing mercy and extending forgiveness.

"Blessed are the merciful," Jesus said, "for they shall receive mercy."



You want to receive mercy? To get it, you have to give it. Instead of calling 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set Him free, Jesus hung up on a cross and prayed "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Let us pray...

discussion questions

Go back to the scenario where "your enemy's" phone lands in your possession. What would be a really good way to handle that situation and what might come of that situation if you chose to handle it wisely?

Look closely at Romans 12:12:14-21. Read it to yourself quietly about 3 times. (After giving your students time to read and reflect, discuss these questions together...)

1. How did David fulfill each part of this passage in his treatment of Saul in tonight's lesson?
2. What do you think it means can to bless your enemy?
3. What is a way that you can "overcome evil with good?"



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#1 True kindness is about loving my enemy.

Last week we studied the words of Romans 12:14,17-21, but they fit so well here that we need to mention them again. As we read this passage, think of how well David handled this situation with Saul...

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it[i] to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



As you look back over that passage, every bit of it fits David to a T. True kindness is about loving my enemy.

#2 True kindness is about recognizing my real enemy.

There's something interesting that you might've missed when we read this story through a minute ago about Saul and David.

In verse 4, how do David's men refer to Saul?

In verse 19, how does Saul refer to himself?

In verses 6-14, how does David refer to Saul? He calls him the Lord's anointed. His lord. The king. His father.

David's men were confused about the enemy. Even Saul himself was confused about his enemy (he thought it was David). But David didn't view Saul as the enemy.

You know what if we started seeing people the way that David viewed Saul? Saul may have been a broken, paranoid, flawed man. He may have become the villain, but to David, Saul was still the Lord's anointed.

What if instead of seeing people's flaws, and instead of being so quick to point out all of the things that people are not, we started seeing people as those made in God's image?

Sometimes it's easy to pick a fight with the wrong enemy, but as Christians we've got to see who the real enemy is. It's not a person, even though people can be evil sometimes. Politics and politicians are not the enemy. Even terrorists are not our enemy.

People are not the enemy. People are people with souls. The enemy is the enemy, and the enemy wants to destroy souls.

Let's spend our time wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against our enemy's kingdom of darkness. (Ephesians 6:12)

#3 True kindness is about repaying evil with good.

In verses 17-19, Saul says, "I have repaid you evil. You have repaid me with good. Now May the Lord reward you with good."

Life is not about taking revenge. It's not about destroying your enemy or kicking someone when they are down. It's about showing mercy and extending forgiveness.

"Blessed are the merciful," Jesus said, "for they shall receive mercy."



You want to receive mercy? To get it, you have to give it. Instead of calling 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set Him free, Jesus hung up on a cross and prayed "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Let us pray...

discussion questions

Go back to the scenario where "your enemy's" phone lands in your possession. What would be a really good way to handle that situation and what might come of that situation if you chose to handle it wisely?

Look closely at Romans 12:12:14-21. Read it to yourself quietly about 3 times. (After giving your students time to read and reflect, discuss these questions together...)

1. How did David fulfill each part of this passage in his treatment of Saul in tonight's lesson?
2. What do you think it means can to bless your enemy?
3. What is a way that you can "overcome evil with good?"



WEEK 3 – PITY vs. COMPASSION

by Jody Marble

WEEK 3 – PITY vs. COMPASSION

remind your students

We are inviting you to join us in showing kindness for this entire series. We are calling this “The Kindness Flood.” We want to attempt to flood our world with godly kindness everyday that we are participating in this series. We want you to go to Instagram and follow [@TheHeartOfKindness](#) where we will be posting something that you can everyday during this series to show kindness to those around you. We also wanna hear from you so we are asking that if you have a story about something you did to show kindness or something you saw someone else do to show kindness send us a direct message on Instagram with your story. Who knows your story might just get highlighted.

introduction option 1:

What would life be like as we know it if:

Obi-Won never showed up when he was Leia’s only hope?

What if the Avengers just watched those alien’s tear apart New York City?

What if Pro-Active would have never made their magic acne medicine to save the confidence of all teens?

What if Life Alert wasn’t able to help grandma when she has “fallen and can’t get up.”

What if Superman just watched the world be taken over by a bald man?

What if your parents never tried to console you as you cried when you were one, two or twenty-five years old with a lifetime worth of student loan debt?

On a more serious note:

What if natural disaster took away your home, and the only thing you received were “positive vibes” and “well wishes?”

What if you were stranded on the road, and the only thing someone offered was a “good luck.”

What if you found yourself in a place in life where you were helpless, and the only thing that was offered to you was pity?

The world is full of pity. According to google, pity is the feeling of sorrow caused by the suffering and misfortunes of others. There are plenty of people in the world that have pity on others. That’s not necessarily a bad thing, but it’s not really a good thing either, because pity doesn’t really do anything for anyone. In fact, most people would rather not have your pity. Pity is just an inward emotion that doesn’t really help the person in need. What the world needs more of is compassion, because compassion leads to action.

Obi-Wan didn’t just send his thoughts to the Republic. The avengers didn’t just hope that the aliens would leave. If you’re stranded on the road in need of help you’re not looking for someone to say “good luck.” You’re looking for someone to do something!! Pity is about as good as this when you find yourself needing help (insert a “thoughts and prayer” meme in the presentation.)



introduction option 2:

(Show a funny video of people falling, embarrassing themselves, messing up, racking themselves, or failing, etc.)

Transition by explaining that “feeling” for someone when they rack themselves or trip and fall may prove that you’re not a cold hearted psychopath, BUT simply “feeling” for someone doesn’t really help them.

Seeing someone in need and solely having pity on them, might make yourself feel better, but it really doesn’t do anything for others, and in case you forgot: being kind is really about YOU. That’s why in our search for finding the Heart of Kindness it’s crucial to understand the difference between Pity vs Compassion.

review

In our search for finding the Heart of Kindness we’ve looked at going the extra mile in week one. In week two we talked about extending mercy instead of revenge. This week we’re going to take a look at the importance of compassion versus pity.

lesson

1 John 3:17-18

17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Here John shows us what pity is: having the world’s goods and seeing a brother in need, yet not helping him. Also, notice that God’s love does not abide in someone who refuses to help his brother.

He also shows us what compassion is: love in word, talk, AND deed! You see true kindness is not just a show of pity or inward thought. Someone with a Heart of Kindness is compelled with compassion to act.

We can also find the importance of outward actions versus inward in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3. Here Paul thanks the church in Thessalonians for the things they DID, not just the thoughts in their heart. Let’s read it together:

1 Thessalonians 3:2-3

2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, 3 remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice Paul doesn’t just commend their faith, but their WORK of faith. He also doesn’t just commend their love, but their LABOR of love. Paul was thanking God for the things that the church had been doing!



Work of Faith

I think an incredible example of a "work of faith" is someone that continues to put their faith in the forefront of their life, even when it's not convenient to do so. Maybe it's someone that doesn't get to go certain place or parties, because of their faith. Maybe you don't get to start on the team, because you chose to attend church camp or Bible class instead of conditioning practice. If you're older, maybe you weren't able to climb the ladder at work because it required you to compromise some of your morals. A "work of faith" is someone who puts their faith FIRST even when it's not easy, fun, or convenient.

Labor of Love

What about a "Labor of Love?" Do you know anyone that's really hard to love? Maybe they're really outgoing and sometimes obnoxious, they're good people, but just hard to be around for a long period of time? When I think of a "labor of love" I think about those people who are constantly kind, sweet, and encouraging, especially to those people who are not always easy to be around and love.

Along those same lines, and a passage that we might be more familiar with is James 2:14-17:

James 2:14-17

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

When I read this it almost sounds to me like James is on his soap-box here. I can just imagine that James had had enough of people seeing others in need and saying "peace and blessings to you" when what they needed was a place to stay, a bite to eat, or a cup to drink from. You see I think so many times we use pity as a way to make ourselves feel better for not doing anything. I don't mean to step on anyone's toes, but I think too often we are guilty of being okay with just feeling bad for others. I guess feeling bad for someone is better than seeing someone in need and not feeling bad. At least it proves that you have some type of heart, but in the grand scheme of things your feeling bad for someone is pointless unless it leads to action. Let me say that again: You can feel for those in need your whole life, but if you don't do something about it, then it's pointless.

That's why in our pursuit of finding the Heart of Kindness we have to be people of compassion, not just pity.

Let's take a look at an example of someone who has the ultimate Heart of Kindness:

Matthew 9:35-38

35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every



affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus was a man that contained the ultimate heart of kindness in this passage we see him looking at the crowds and being moved with compassion.

Remember that story when Jesus saw that adulterous woman and said to his friends, "man I feel bad for her?" Or what about that time when Jesus skirted around the edges of that area where the man named Legion lived? How about when he was worried about catching germs or a disease from those sick people???

You won't find stories like that about my Savior, because he knew what true kindness was. He didn't simple have pity on those who were less fortunate. He had compassion that compelled him to action.

I pray that we can step closer into finding the Heart of Kindness by understanding the importance of compassion that leads to action.

lessons to learn

1. Love does not abide in someone who refuses a helping hand (1 John 3:17)
2. Love requires DEEDS or ACTION (1 John 3:18)
3. Pity shouldn't make you feel better about doing nothing. (James 2:14-17)
4. Jesus showed us that compassion moves us to action. (Matthew 9:35-38)

discussion questions

Q: Thinking about what John said in 1 John 3:17-18, what "goods" do you have that you could use to help others?

Q: Obviously, we don't want to diminish the importance of prayer, and we should be prayerful in all things, BUT when should we do more than just pray?

Do you know of any examples of this in the Bible? (Exodus 14:15; God tells Moses to DO something!)

Q: What are some examples christians responding with prayer AND action to help those in need? (Natural disasters, homeless drives, etc. I don't have the source, but supposedly according to FEMA, faith-based organizations make up 75% of the help during natural disasters such as occurred during Hurricane Irma and Harvey.)

Q: Do you think people feel better about themselves not helping others if they feel bad about it or express their "heart-brokenness?"

Q: What are somethings that you have compassion for that you can't help but do something about?

Q: What are some things that we can do for others to flood the world with kindness?



WEEK 4 – SELFISH vs. SELFLESS

by Will Harrison

WEEK 4 - SELFISH vs. SELFLESS

class prep

- review the Kent Brantley story, use what you need
- study Luke 14.12-14

remind your students

We are inviting you to join us in showing kindness for this entire series. We are calling this "The Kindness Flood." We want to attempt to flood our world with godly kindness everyday that we are participating in this series. We want you to go to Instagram and follow [@TheHeartOfKindness](#) where we will be posting something that you can everyday during this series to show kindness to those around you. We also wanna hear from you so we are asking that if you have a story about something you did to show kindness or something you saw someone else do to show kindness send us a direct message on Instagram with your story. Who knows your story might just get highlighted.

introduction

11,310 people died. 28,616 cases suspected. (1)

This is the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Ebola is one of the deadliest diseases to ever strike West Africa.

In Liberia, a country riveted by civil war, it is said by some that Ebola is scarier than the civil war.

Dr. Kent Brantley is an American doctor who gave of himself in one of the most sacrificial ways. He and his family served with a medical relief organization in the country of Liberia, a place affected by the 2014 outbreak of Ebola.

Dr. Brantley's intentions of going to Liberia were to help in the hospitals and medical facilities with the every day hospital operations – he didn't expect an outbreak of Ebola. Dr. Brantley had the option to protect himself and his family by exiting the country. But he chose to stay.

Dr. Kent Brantley had lots of things going for him. He had recently finished med school. He had a wife and two kids... But he wanted to do something more.

An act of selflessness that depicts what we're really talking about is the story of Dr. Kent Brantley. Dr. Kent Brantley had all this going for him in the United States—perfect health, no issues, no real dangers.

Kent and his family chose to use their abilities in the country of Liberia, with a people who had less than they did. With a people who didn't have the same kind of medical infrastructure we have. And unknowingly, a people who were facing an outbreak of a deadly disease that we don't face.

These people could never pay them back.



review

We're in our fourth and final week's study of The Heart of Kindness. And as we have established, we're taking a determined and deeper look at the heart of kindness.

We've looked at:

- Mile 1 vs. Mile 2
- Revenge vs. Mercy
- Pity vs. Compassion

What we've seen is that what we often classify as "kind" acts are not always what true kindness is about.

True kindness, as we've studied, is going the second mile. It's showing mercy rather than taking it out on someone who "deserves it." It's being compassionate rather than simply saying, "I'm really sorry that's happening..."

a look at Luke 14

Tonight, we're continuing our study by looking at the difference in being selfish and selfless. There's a parable told in Luke chapter 14 that illustrates the lesson we're wanting to learn tonight. The parable of the Great Banquet. The big focus for this lesson is verse 12-14.

What's the scene? Jesus is dining in the house of a ruler of the Pharisees (another version says "one of the chief Pharisees") // This guy was a member of the Sanhedrin. So who was the Pharisee? Basically, he's a religious leader and man of influence + reputation! Big time in the community. (2)

Starting in verse 12.

12 He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

Jesus says "do not invite". The original text says something like "invite not only your friends, family, relatives, and rich neighbors, but also invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind..."

Big thing here: Jesus gives 4 groups of people that we like to invite. These are the kinds of people we want to invite! (can expound) We want these people to be at the feast!! Friends, family, relatives, rich neighbors. People who can invite us to their own big dinner party.



But Jesus then says, let's invite these other people, too! These other people are interesting for Jesus to throw out there. These are the kind of people from whom some of the Pharisees would stay far away. They would never want to be seen with these! Okay, Jesus, why invite these people? Yes, I know, I know I need to be nice, polite – I know it's good to invite everybody. But Jesus says, "no, I want you to invite these people because they cannot pay you back."

v14 "and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you"

There are three simple lessons that jump off the page in this lesson:

lessons to learn

- 1 A selfless heart seeks to invite others.
- 2 A selfless heart does not seek attention.
- 3 A selfless heart seeks heaven.

(At the end, after you've covered the selfless heart, you can flip this and point out that if you struggle with these three, it might be because you have a selfish heart. A selfish heart does not like inviting others, seeks attention, and in the end, is not seeking heaven.)

#1 A selfless heart seeks to invite.

Did you see what Jesus said?

13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind...

There is so much to be said about an invitation. What does an invitation represent? An invitation helps someone feel wanted. Needed. Desired.

I don't like to show up to something I'm not invited to – you know what I mean? Sometimes a party happens and you aren't invited. You know how that feels? It feels like no fun.

Some options of clips to show here (or even at beginning of the lesson):

1. Scene in Rudy, teammates want him to dress out ("This is for Rudy, Coach")
2. Scene from beginning of Ice Princess, invitation scene
3. Choose your own video.

But what an incredible feeling it is to be invited to something you weren't expecting to be invited to.

A big point: do things to make people feel special.



Parallel to this, Jesus gives us an invitation. The very existence of salvation is an act of selflessness, a heart seeking to invite. While we were still helpless, Christ died for us in order to give us a way into the kingdom.

#2 A selfless heart does not seek attention.

Something that's good to consider: Do you do "good" because you know (deep inside) that you'll receive something in return – you'll be paid back somehow? Maybe it's you choosing to "do good" / "be nice" / "extend a hand" to those people you like... Or those people who are popular... Or those who know will return the favor nicely. This is what is easy to do, honestly. You don't see many stories of Jesus doing "good" to the rich, religious, healthy. [This is not to say he didn't do good to them...] The stories we have of Jesus show Him healing the lame, blind, crippled, lepers, hurting, possessed.

What a gesture it is to invite someone who can't repay you... You know and they know. They can never repay you. It will be clear to the poor, crippled, lame, blind that you are trying to be kind.

We're talking about the heart of kindness. It's nice to invite the first 4 groups. It goes above and beyond, you go mile 2, go show mercy when you invite the latter 4. This is what the heart of kindness looks like. Do something with the expectation of receiving nothing in return.

Thinking back to the story we led off with: Dr. Brantley didn't go to a poorer country in West Africa to seek recognition. Didn't do it because he might meet the president. True kindness doesn't seek self-recognition. Doesn't seek attention. Glory goes to God.

#3 A selfless heart seeks heaven.

Finally, at the end of verse 14, Jesus says what the result will be for His followers...
For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

What is the "resurrection of the just"? Glad you asked. This is simply the time / the day that all Christians are waiting for. The day when we will be called up to heaven. The day when the holy (or just) in will be raised from the dead to be with God. Heaven will be your reward. A kind heart seeks heaven.

Jesus says these comforting words a couple chapters earlier in Luke 12,

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 12:32-34



discussion questions

Q: Why do you do good things? // Why are you kind?

Q: Does it make any sense to do something if you're not getting something in return?

Q: What examples of selfish gestures do you see in our world?

Q: What examples of selfless gestures do you see in our world?

Q: How can you live with a selfless heart?

Some verses to keep close:

Galatians 6.10 *So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

Hebrews 3.13 *But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*

Matthew 6.1 *Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.*

resources

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html>
2. Barnes' Notes Luke

