

Living In The Overflow Of God's Love

Love is Kind

Introduction: (Song- Step by Step)

God is a kind God!

I bet there are lots of stories expressing God's kindness. (Think of your story)

Stories of Kindness

The Married Couple:

We were so excited to invite Mary and Jesus to our wedding. My mom had known Mary since she was a teenager. We were thrilled when both Mary and Jesus decided to come to our wedding. Interestingly, there were a bunch of other guys who came along as well. No problem though... the more the merrier we say.

But something happened that still amazes us to this day. We had a pretty large gathering for our banquet and we really didn't plan enough. The wine we provided went pretty fast and it was obvious that our guests were not planning on leaving anytime soon. But somehow Jesus got word of the problem and he-- he solved it. He not only solved it by producing more wine, he actually made it a much better wine. I recall one of the wedding coordinators commenting that it was as good as the \$200 bottle of Bordeaux she bought at a winery. I mean this was top-notch stuff!

What amazes us is that we now find out that this was Jesus' first miracle. And Jesus' decides to use this miracle on us! Can you believe it! Jesus' first miracle was used to save us from looking like bad hosts... Amazing!

Jesus was kind to us...

The Tax Guy:

This guy's name is Zacchaeus. Nice little guy. His conversation would go something like this: I was loaded. Lots of money...but a little short on friends if you know what I mean? I had the big house, the nice clothes... but no friends. In fact, I couldn't remember the last time someone ever stopped by to visit me. Of course I really can't blame them-- can I? My problem was I made lots of money by pressing and forcing people to pay their taxes and to-- pay me! Believe me, I pressed and pushed for a lot! No wonder I had no friends.

But one day, Jesus came to town and he walked right up to me, right in the middle of everyone and said... "I coming to your house today." Wow... imagine that! Jesus, coming to my house... and it was like he wanted everyone to know it too.

You know, Jesus was the first one to ever sign my guest book!

That was a very good and unbelievably kind thing Jesus did for me.

The Woman (Mark 5:21-43)

That woman who had been sick for 12 or so years...Her illness was looked at almost the same way we look at an HIV person (contagious and doomed!). Listen to her story:

I ran out of doctors, I ran out of money, and I ran out of hope. It was a lonely time. I had no friends... they were all afraid of me. Afraid that they would catch what I had. So I was basically left all alone.

But one day, Jesus came to town. It was so chaotic. People were everywhere. On this particular day, Jesus was met by a local ruler whose daughter was dying. So Jesus and his followers were heading for this rulers house in order to heal this girl. The crowd was awful. People pushing and shoving, all wanting to get a glimpse of Jesus. But I was desperate and this was my only chance.

I stayed in the shadows as I followed Jesus. I was looking for the right opportunity. I kept inching closer and closer to Jesus. I just knew if I could touch even his jacket that something would happen. And it did! It's like my body changed instantly. I could feel the blood rushing through my veins and my face got real warm. And I was actually able to stand up straight again. So I stood there in amazement. But then Jesus stopped. He said, "who touched me?" I was scared to death. I hid behind this big guy... holding my breath. But Jesus asked again "who touched me?" So I decided I'd better say something. I was shaking the whole time. Then Jesus stepped toward me and I told him the whole story about what happened to me and what I did.

It was amazing as I think back through it. Jesus had people everywhere. He was going to a rulers house to heal a dying girl. But Jesus stopped long enough to hear my story.

Jesus stopped long enough to listen to this woman. The crowd is all around Jesus, and they're waiting as he listens to this woman. The ruler and his dying daughter wait as Jesus listens to this woman. He didn't have to listen. The healing was enough. It was enough for the woman! It was enough for the crowd! But it wasn't enough for Jesus. Jesus wanted to do more than heal her body. He wanted to hear her story. Jesus wanted to hear the whole story.

What a kind thing for Jesus to do. This miracle restored her health and his kindness restored her dignity. Look at what Jesus says to this woman... **Mark 5:34** "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

I can see the woman's eyes fill with tears as she is told that Jesus never called anyone else daughter... only her!

The Kindness of Jesus

We are quick to notice the **power** of Jesus, and the **passion** of Jesus and the **devotion** of Jesus.

A. But those who know Jesus, know that God cloaks himself in kindness.

1. Jesus is kind enough to care about our mistakes (lack of preparation)
2. Jesus is kind enough to have lunch with a short crook
3. Jesus is kind enough to bless a suffering sister.

B. Paul says- Love is Kind (1 Cor. 13:4)

1. Nehemiah agrees- 9:16-18 "But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. 17 They refused to listen and failed to

remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, 18 even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, 'This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' or when they committed awful blasphemies.

2. David agrees- Psa. 63:3- Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You. (NASB)

3. Paul speaks of God's kindness and love in Titus 3:4-5a- At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

•Paul continues in Ephesians- 2:7-8

7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— NIV

7Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. 8Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! MSG

4. But listen to Jesus' own word:

28"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." NIV

C. Farmers in the ancient world

1. Some sources indicate that an inexperienced ox was trained by yoking it to an experience ox. (Whereby the experienced ox carried the burden and pulls the weight.

2. I wonder how many burdens Jesus is carrying that we know nothing about.

We know that he carries our

•Sin •Shame •Eternal Debt

-I wonder if he carries things we're not aware of

-Fears before we feel them?

-Carries our confusion so that we wont have to.

Or what about those times that we're surprised by our own sense of peace?

-Could it be at these times that Jesus has lifted our anxieties and placed a yoke of kindness on our lives?

3. How often do you thank him for his kindness? (We might say "not enough")

•Does our ingratitude stop his kindness from coming to us? No!

Because- Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them Without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

D. Kindness is defined here as an act of grace. (Grace is good and good for you!)

- Kindness says more than good morning... Kindness makes the coffee.

1. **Jesus fits this description**-It wasn't only good that he attended the wedding... He rescued it!
2. He not only healed the woman... he honored her.
3. He not only called Zaccheaus by name... he entered his house.

And... what about you? **Open Mic**

1. Hasn't he helped you out of some tough times?
2. Hasn't he entered your house?
3. Has there ever been a time he was too busy to hear your story?

Now you know what I'm going to say right? (Can't you be kind to others?)

A. Paul is right... Love is Kind! (Jesus is kind)

1. How kind are you?
2. When was the last time you did something kind to someone in you family?
(Here's the hook-- without being asked!)
3. Think about school or the workplace
 - Who's ignored or avoided? •Who's the shy student? •The grumpy guy?
 - Maybe he doesn't speak the language -Or doesn't fit in **Are you kind?**

B. Kind hearts are kind quietly

1. They let the guy in traffic cut in.
2. Or let the young mom with 3 kids cut the line in the grocery store.
3. They pick up the neighbors trashcan that blew into the street

C. But what about other believers? (People in the church- people here?)

1. Christians understand that perhaps the neediest person they'll meet all week are here (church services)
2. Paul says: **Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Gal. 6:10**

D. And here's the greatest challenge for us... (What about your enemies?)

1. How kind are you to those who want what you want or want to take what you have?

"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29If someone strikes you on one cheek turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. 30Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31Do to others as you would have them do to you.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. 33And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. 34And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. 35But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Conclusion:

- A. Kindness: •at home •in public •at church •and with your enemies
- B. Love is Kind

1. Jesus is kind
2. We can only be kind when we understand God's kindness in our own lives...

Father... (Song)