

Kindness

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[0 : 0 0] more of that but first we're going to continue on in our series sermon series and the fruits of the spirit today we're going to look at kindness and kindness is one of those things that we might say about someone right you might look at me for instance and say hey jesse is a kind person at least that's as i hope what you're thinking but what makes us come to a conclusion like that what makes us look at somebody and be able to say man you know what that person is marked with kindness well let's do a silly thought experiment can you actually look at a stranger and make that kind of observation not knowing them at all right so to be even sillier imagine walking through the grocery store could you literally legitimately walk through the grocery store with confidence say like kind person not kind person kind person not kind person like of course we can't do that we couldn't know if we were being correct or incorrect right when i was a child i would look at somebody and make the observation of um kindness based on oh they had tattoos they're probably not a kind person and again that was me and that was me being childish um as a young kid but then as the scripture says i became a man and i put away childish things right the point is it's impossible to draw those kinds of conclusions about people because kindness is proven in what we do jesus gives us an amazing parable about kindness uh and and looking at what a person does to show what kindness truly is and so we're going to luke chapter 10 verses 25 to 37 and jesus says this well actually there's this little story beforehand he has this interaction says behold a lawyer stood up to put him to the test saying teacher what shall i do to inherit eternal life and he said to him what is written in the law and this lawyer said to him he answered you shall love the lord your god with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself and jesus said to him you have answered correctly do this and you will live but he this lawyer desiring to justify himself said to jesus and who is my neighbor jesus replied a man was going down from jerusalem to jericho and he fell among robbers who stripped him and beat him and departed leaving him half dead now by chance a priest was going down that road and when he saw him he passed by on the other side so likewise a levite when he came to the place and saw him passed by on the other side but a samaritan as he journeyed came to where he was and when he saw him he had compassion he went to him and bound up his wounds pouring oil and wine on them then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him and the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper saying take care of him and whatever more you spend i will repay you when i come back which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers and he said the one who showed him mercy and jesus said to him you go and do likewise it's a beautiful story a beautiful parable one that shows us kindness and kind of shows us when we think of godlike kindness what what do we mean what is god trying to get across and we see this throughout the bible that godlike kindness is a meeting real needs and b doing it without being harsh or cruel so think of it this way in the sweetest kindest manner you can give your wife an iron for her birthday right everyone's laughing because we intrinsically know that is a bad idea right but and the question

is like whose desire are you meeting with that with that kind of gift and if that lands you in my office for marriage counseling like hey that's on you buddy right now the point is you can give something with the nicest of attitude but when it comes to godlike kindness who is benefiting from that is really important but then again so is the attitude in which you in which that kind of meeting somebody's need is done if you were to like say go to a soup kitchen and serve there but as you're doing it you're doing it with a scowl and you're aggressively slapping the food on people's plates all the while thinking i am such a good person right now helping out these losers they should be thanking me in one sense you are meeting a real need in another sense you are doing it harshly and that is also not godly kindness so to be clear godly kindness holy spirit kindness is both particular in action and in attitude and that's what we see in this story of the good samaritan now when you it can easily miss but how jesus told this story in the manner that he did it is actually brilliant because he is challenging his audience right the typical heroes that they would have expected would have been the priest and the levite but those two are cast very differently they aren't the ones that stop and help this man instead it is the samaritan jesus makes the samaritan the hero and back then we have to realize like how much existed between jews and samaritans at the time they didn't get along to say the least the closest modern equivalent we would have to kind of to what jesus did here would have been to retold this story but as an as a taliban fighter bringing a wounded marine back into camp leatherneck that would have been like the closest modern equivalent we would have had it's nobody would have expected that in jesus's day samaritans hated jews jews hated samaritans and that hatred went back generations there was a long-standing family feud between them they lived separately to one another they did whatever they could to avoid one another a good jew would instead of going through samaria to get to the other side for a destination he was trying to reach would take the long route around even though it might extend his trip by days because stepping one foot into their land was not acceptable so we see the kind of thing that is going on here we see the kind of what god what jesus is trying to draw out and challenge his hearers and what godlike kindness is like right so let's first look at what he is pointing out and that is the connection of kindness kindness kindness with kindness relationship is required god proves it to us over and over again we we know the common romans verse the romans verse where it says his loving kindness or his kindness leads us to repentance why does he do that why is he leading us to repentance to for the sake of reconciling us back into relationship with him that is what god is desiring that is what his kindness towards us is all about and here's the thing every godlike kindness that we see requires both a giver and a recipient now i want to say this sure you can be kind to yourself and that is important but if that is all you do if the only person you be you're being kind to ever is yourself that makes you a narcissist not a kind person being kind like god being the having that godlike kindness like it involves relationship building god is a bridge builder not a wall builder

he is always building towards us building towards people and that means being kind to every kind of person not just your friends not just your family the people that are easy to get along with it means being kind to strangers those people that man they're a bit of a wild card you don't know if they're going to be good or bad or nice or mean to you but you're you're kind to them it even means being kind to those that you might define as your enemies right here's a relatable example for us today that might mean people on the other side of the political aisle to you how about being kind to them and showing them kindness that makes it real doesn't it that's kind of a modern day samaritan jew scenario when you start realizing god's kindness flows to all those kinds of people as well then you begin to see how difficult kindness is how unnatural it is to us we are tribal to the core we slip into us versus them very easily and we do it all the time and nothing puts that on display as clearly as presidential election season right and this is why kindness is never a fruit of politics it is a it's not a fruit that man can muster up of his own will and of his own strength it is a it is foreign to us actually it is a fruit of the spirit it only comes by what dallas willard calls living the with god life only god can produce that kind of kindness in us because that is who he is god that's what he's done he loved us so much that he did whatever it took to close the relational gap you might think a democrat a republican is on the wrong side of the aisle but like when you think about our relationship to god before we're saved we were like really on the wrong side of the most important aisle there was and god you know what he didn't sit over there and say like i'm waiting for you to cross over to my side you know what he did he crossed the aisle he came to us not by changing his values not by changing himself or his truth he came across and he met our real need right where we were at and he did that through sending his son jesus who came and he walked among us and he taught us and he healed and he proclaimed truth and ultimately died in our place and when you and i saved through faith in jesus christ what we get because of that is we get brought into his kingdom we got brought back in relationship to the father our sins are forgiven guilt shame are removed we are restored again and we are filled with his holy spirit the very abiding presence of god who comes and dwells with us god meets our real needs he is a relationship builder he is a bridge builder now that kind of godlike kindness is pretty amazing now how can you tell if you've got that godlike kindness in your life well i want to ask you this question is your relational world getting bigger or smaller are you only surrounded by people that look like you that think like you or that vote like you because it's easier to live a curated life with folks from our tribe right isn't it but is that the living with god like is that the the living with the with god life of kindness to neighbors and to strangers and i would say no jesus would say no scripture tells us no when you look at jesus's life you can't really come to that kind of conclusion but we see this god who chases after us with kindness he woos us with kindness brings us back to himself with kindness crosses the aisle with kindness and all that kindness all that all that costliness it comes with blessing and relational connection but we have to realize that it did cost

god something to do that which points to the cost of kindness and we got to reckon with this kindness requires a costly generosity of us it will move us toward that right we all know this scripture if you're you know even if you're you're not a follower of jesus you probably heard this one god so loved the world he did what gave he gave kindness is going to cost you something you're going to have to lose something but a kind and generous heart it's not resentful about losing those things and giving those things away and it doesn't give them with strings attached it gives with joy divine kindness is unconditional and it is joyfully generous divine kindness it chooses to lose so others can gain and it does it with a sincere smile for the for the kind-hearted person losing is so much fun not because you're finally just getting rid of the thing you didn't want anyway think like the wife that re-gifts her iron she didn't want for her birthday the generosity that kindness produces is sacrificial it's sacrificial god so loved the world that he gave his only son not his 20th born son he wasn't up there being like well i can i have a ton of these here here you go let's see if this works he gave his most precious gift his most costly gift jesus came in obedience to the father and the purpose of their plan of redemption before time began he stepped into history in the fullness of time and chose to give his life you can't give more than that god did whatever he took to bridge the gap between us and him he met our need and it cost him everything that is the heart of divine kindness that is holy spirit kindness it will make you sacrificially generous and you might ask well jesse how much do i have to give them well that's that's the thing sacro sacrificial generosity doesn't start by asking the question that way and it isn't just about giving money right kindness that promotes generosity is about being sacrificial with the resources that we have sure it can be money but you know it can also be our time when you read the gospels when you look at the life of jesus it doesn't matter what he was doing or on his way to do something he welcomed every interruption he never told anyone like sorry i ain't got time for you he always had time so that can be a generous use a kind use of our time being generous with our time being generous with our attention towards people that's one way another way is with our talents or to quote napoleon dynamite what are your skills what are the skills that you have what are you able to do and you can put them to work for the benefit of others look at what this samaritan did he went and he bound he he paused he took time he paid attention to this man he bound up his wounds he had the ability and the know-how of how to do that maybe another way to leverage your kindness maybe you're a person that has position and power what kind of doors can you open to benefit somebody in need when you look at the story of the good samaritan you see all of these things in play all these kindnesses he's giving him his time which the priest and the levite didn't right he bound up he dressed his wounds he spent his money on the guy he goes and he he pays the guy two days worth of wages work wages and said take care of this man i'll see to it and guess what i'm gonna start a tab with you i'm gonna come back whatever it costs me i'll pay it back don't worry about it i got him covered relational building is costly kindness godlike kindness is costly it

compels us to leverage our resources to lift of the others up just like jesus did for us and that gets to the cause of kindness the merit the samaritan when he saw that man on the side of the road that jew on the side of the road he didn't see a jew he saw a person who was in need that's who he saw he didn't see somebody to hate he saw somebody to help jesus he did the same thing he walked around with his eyes looking for the poor and the vulnerable he said of himself that man i came to seek and save the lost a little snippet of jesus's ministry in his little mo from matthew 9 says this 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 and when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd because jesus looked because jesus saw them his heart was filled with compassion what did he see he saw a people who were harassed and helpless what do you see what do you walk around life looking for and here's the thing when we choose to see when we choose to look when we choose to open our hearts and let that come in and affect us we find out that compassion and kindness are individual these are emotions that we feel and they compel us to action jesus felt compassion and that is why he went through this district of galilee his very hometown teaching proclaiming the kingdom healing every disease and affliction that he came across and that is why he then turns and says to his disciples his disciples right after this statement of they're harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd he says to them my friends the harvest is plentiful the laborers are few pray earnestly to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest who's the harvest that he's talking about again it is the harassed and the helpless the poor and the vulnerable and that is both true material and economically but it's also true in a very spiritual sense which is why the church has been a faithful historic champion for the poor and vulnerable throughout its generations it has we understand that the heart of the father is kindness toward us he finds us poor in spirit but he's not going to leave us there he's going to meet our needs he sends out jesus did this he sent out his disciples he sends us out today as his representatives to continue his work that he began and when you see god intervene in someone's life when you see him come in that the the impact that is made you see how much it changes them for the for the better and that speaks to the power of kindness the samaritan's kindness saved a dying man not only did it save him but when he recovered he had no debt to pay off you know if this was a real story and not a parable that that man that was left on the side dying that jew all that prejudice he would have had towards samaritans would have been radically impacted when he realized who helped him doesn't the bible remember doesn't it tell us his kindness is what leads us to repentance and that repentance that he's talking about is our response to his offer of salvation by faith in jesus christ who died in our place why we were we're still sinners why we were still enemies of god and this repentance means that we wake up that we recognize maybe for the first time you know what we were wrong who we thought god was maybe for some of us we just thought god was this mythical creature that people made up not really alive dead and then we find out no he's real and he is not silent or maybe we thought yeah he may be out there but he is he is like mean-spirited he is unkind

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