Be Kind To One Another
Ephesians 4:29-32

READ SCRIPTURE

PRAYER

Introduction

The title of my message this (morning/evening) is “Be Kind To One Another.” If all of us would put this message into practice in our daily lives, God would use us to make a tremendous difference in the lives of others.

ILLUSTRATION: The story is told about a LAWYER who was driving down the road one day in his big fancy limousine, when he saw two pathetic men eating grass by the road side.

The lawyer told his limo driver to stop. He got out of the limousine…… walked over to the two men and asked, “WHY ARE YOU EATING GRASS?”

“WE DON’T HAVE NO MONEY FOR FOOD” replied one of the men. “Oh well, you can come with me to my house,” insisted the lawyer.

The man said, “Well that’s mighty kind of you sir, but sir, I’ve got a wife and three kids.” The Lawyer said, “Bring them along too!”

The man said, “Well sir, that’s mighty kind of you, but what about my friend here?” The lawyer turned to the other man and said, “You can come along too.”
The other man said, “Well sir that’s awful kind of you, but I’ve got a wife and SIX kids!” The lawyer said, “You can bring them all with you!” The more the merrier!

Once inside the LIMO, the two men once again thanked the lawyer for his kindness. HE said, “No problem! You are going to love my place. WHY, I’LL BET MY GRASS IS AT LEAST A FOOT HIGH!”

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For some reason I don’t believe that is what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote: “Be Kind and compassionate to one another.”

Let me ask you a tough question: “Do you consider yourself to be a kind person?”

Let me ask you an even tougher question: “Would those who know you best say you are a kind person?

How would your mate answer that question?
How about your kids?
How about the people who work with you every day?
If your dog could talk, what would he or she say?

Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22 that kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. (I’M SURE MIKE HAS ALREADY COVERED THIS PARTICULAR FRUIT IN HIS WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDIES)

KINDNESS should flow from our lives into the lives of others because of our personal relationship with JESUS CHRIST, the MOST KIND HUMAN BEING WHO EVER LIVED.
-In **JOHN 8** we read the account of the Pharisees dragging a woman they had caught in the act of adultery before Jesus. The Pharisees, being the staunch, legalistic men they were, were ready to stone this woman to death for her sinful actions.

  **But rather than siding with the Pharisees, Jesus chose instead to show KINDNESS toward the sinful woman by offering her His grace and forgiveness.** Then Jesus sent her on her way with the command, **“Go and sin no more!”**

- In **MATTHEW 19** we read the account when the disciples rebuked those who brought their children to Jesus in order to have him bless them. But rather than shooing the children away, Jesus rebuked his disciples and said, **“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”** **JESUS WAS SO KIND TO LITTLE CHILDREN!**

- And in **JOHN 4** we read about Jesus’ encounter with the **Samaritan woman at the well** in Sychar. During the course of their conversation, Jesus revealed the painful truth to this woman about her past history.

  She had been through **five failed marriages** and was presently living with a man she wasn’t married to. But rather than condemning her, **JESUS offered her instead what she had really been searching for her whole life and that was the Living Water. DON’T YOU KNOW JESUS KINDNESS RATHER THAN CONDEMNATION COMPLETELY CHANGED THAT WOMAN’S LIFE?**

These were not just some isolated, random incidents in **JESUS’ life. Everywhere Jesus went he “committed random acts of kindness” toward the sick, the diseased, the sinful and the down trodden.**

**As Christians, that same kindness that Christ showed toward others should characterize the way we treat others.**
Let’s consider THREE PRACTICAL WAYS in which you and I can demonstrate the KINDNESS OF CHRIST in our lives.

First of all…………..

I. Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Words

Read: VERSE 29

1. What did Paul mean by “unwholesome talk?”

That word “unwholesome” means, “poisonous, venomous or filthy.”

What Paul is commanding us here is not to let any “poisonous talk” ……do not let any “venomous talk” or “filthy talk” come out of your mouths.

2. As Christians we must understand our WORDS are powerful and the things we say to others can have a tremendous effect on the lives of others, either positively or negatively.

I want you to turn with me to PROVERBS 18:21. You need to highlight this verse in your Bible.

Read Proverbs 18:21

*The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

3. With our WORDS we can either SPEAK LIFE on people or SPEAK DEATH on them.

When we speak words of KINDNESS…….words that encourage…….words that comfort…….words that cheer…….words that build up…..words that lift spirits…….words that give hope…….its as though we BREATHE FRESH NEW LIFE into the individual we speak those words to.
But when we speak UNKIND WORDS……words that discourage ……words that sharply criticize……words that condemn…… words that wound……words that tear down……words that break hearts and crush spirits……IT IS JUST LIKE SPEAKING DEATH ON THOSE INDIVIDUALS WE SAY THOSE UNKIND WORDS TO.

4. I would imagine most all of you can still remember the most cruel, the most hurtful, the most unkind words anyone ever spoke to you.

I can still remember something very cruel a man in my home Church said to me over thirty years ago and even though I have forgiven him I can’t help but remember the unkind thing he said every time I see him. (And by the way, I have since learned others have been the recipient of this man’s venomous words.)

5. When Jesus said to that adulterous woman, “Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more” He breathed fresh new life into that woman!

When Jesus told Zacchaeus to “Come down out of that sychamore tree for I must stay at your house today” He breathed fresh new life into Zacchaeus.

After Peter denied Christ and failed him miserably, Jesus breathed brand new life into Peter when he said to him in JOHN 21, “Feed my sheep.”

6. Oh Christians may we THINK before we SPEAK. May we always be MINDFUL that our words CAN and often DO make a difference in the lives of others.

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But not only should we try to always BE KIND IN WORD………..
II. Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Deeds

1. ACTS 10:38 tells us “Jesus went around doing good.”

2. As I stated earlier, Jesus ministry was characterized by doing “random acts of kindness” everywhere He went.

3. Wouldn’t it be great if when our earthly life is over they could print these simple words on our gravestone:

   He went around doing good or she went around doing good.

   My what a powerful testimony that would be to others of a life well-lived.

4. One of JESUS’ most popular parables involved a man who demonstrated for all of us what a difference DEEDS OF KINDNESS can make in the lives of others.

   ……In the PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN Jesus introduces us to a man who stopped to offer help to a complete stranger who had been beaten and robbed along the road. But the Good Samaritan didn’t stop there, he even PAID the man’s medical bills until he recovered.

   Today, over 2,000 years after Jesus first told that parable, we still refer to those who do A DEED OF KINDNESS as being “a Good Samaritan.”

   I L L U S T R A T I O N

Some construction workers were building a new HIGH RISE apartment building right across the street from the LOCAL HOSPITAL.

One day while they were working on the THIRD FLOOR of the new apartment building, some of the construction workers noticed a little girl standing in the 3rd story window of the hospital staring at them.
The next day, the construction workers looked across the street and sure enough that same little girl was standing in that third floor window of the hospital. Except this time the little girl was holding up a poster which read, “My name is LISA, what are your names?”

During their lunch break the construction workers went to a nearby store and bought a piece of POSTER BOARD and a MAGIC MARKER on which they wrote all their names:

Bill...........Bob........and Ted. And they held it up for Lisa to see.

The next day, Lisa appeared in her third story hospital room window again, this time holding up a new poster, which read: “I’M SEVEN YEARS OLD, HOW OLD ARE YOU?”

For several days this written communication went back and forth between Lisa and the construction workers. Then one day the construction workers noticed Lisa wasn’t standing in the window where they had grown accustomed to seeing her each day.

During their morning break one of the construction workers called the nurses’ station on the third floor of the hospital to inquire about Lisa.

The nurse told him that Lisa has leukemia and that she had taken a turn for the worse the previous night and had been moved to the pediatric intensive care unit.

The construction workers pooled their money together and bought LISA a card and a beautiful flower arrangement and had them sent to her room in the Pediatric Intensive Care.

Several days went by with no word on LISA’S condition. Then one day the construction workers noticed a nurse standing in that third floor window where they had first seen LISA.

The nurse was holding up a poster on which she had written these words: “LISA PASSED AWAY LAST NIGHT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS.”
5. Christians, there are lots of LISA’S out there! There are people we cross paths with every day who need HELP and HOPE. People who need someone to show them the LOVE, the KINDNESS and the COMPASSION of CHRIST.

Will you be the one?
Will you be that one person who will make a difference in the life of those individuals?

6. If we will all dedicate ourselves to doing ONE GOOD DEED AT A TIME to ONE PERSON AT A TIME, ONE DAY AT A TIME, the Lord can use you and me to make a difference!

Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Words!
Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Deeds!

Finally…….

III. Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Spirit

1. Let’s go back to our original text in EPHESIANS 4. Look at VERSE 32 again.

READ: EPHESIANS 4:32

2. I’ll never forget something I heard Professor Bob Martin say years ago when I was a student at JBC.

He said, “We are never more like Christ than when we are willing to forgive another.”

3. When Jesus hung dying on the cross of Calvary, He didn’t ask His heavenly Father to send down fire from heaven and destroy all those responsible for His crucifixion did He?

No, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”
4. Paul is telling us in this 32nd verse that it is on the basis of what JESUS did on the cross that God is willing to FORGIVE you and me of ALL OUR SINS.

None of us deserves to be forgiven do we? None of us is worthy to receive God’s forgiveness are we?

But because of JESUS act of redemption on the cross, GOD is willing to give us that FORGIVENESS none of us deserve.

5. You know if you live long enough in this old sinful world, someone is going to wrong you………someone is going to sin against you……….someone is going to hurt you deeply. Someone is going to say something or do something that just breaks your heart.

And when that happens, you can do one of two things. You can stay angry and let your spirit become poisoned with bitterness and resentment.

OR

In the SPIRIT OF CHRISTLIKENESS you can FORGIVE THE WRONG THEY COMMITTED AGAINST YOU.

6. What we don’t understand is that when we FORGIVE someone who has wronged us, WE RELEASE OURSELVES from our own emotional prison.

When in the spirit of Christ-like kindness we FORGIVE another, we begin to HEAL and MOVE ON WITH OUR LIFE.
C O N C L U S I O N

After many years of serving in NEW GUINEA, a missionary returned home to the United States. One day a minister friend of his asked the missionary to describe what life was like when he first went to NEW GUINEA.

The missionary said, “I found a mission field there that looked more hopeless than if God had sent me to a jungle to convert wild tigers to Christ.”

The people there were barbaric savages, void of any sense of morality. If a mother was carrying her baby and the baby wouldn’t stop crying, she would throw the baby along the roadside and leave it there to die. If a man saw his elderly father fall and break an arm or a leg, he would just leave him to suffer all alone. The New Guinea people showed absolutely NO KINDNESS or COMPASSION toward anyone.

Then the preacher asked the missionary, “Did you start seeing big changes in their behavior after you started preaching the gospel?

The missionary said, “No, I started seeing changes when they saw me demonstrate the LOVE of KINDNESS of CHRIST toward them.

When I would see a mother throw her crying baby along the roadside, I would pick the baby up and comfort him until he stopped crying then I would hand him back to his mother.

When I would learn of an elderly man or woman who had fallen and broken an arm or leg, I would go to their hut and set the broken limb with a stint and take care of them until they healed.

When I found someone who was starving to death, I would bring them to my hut and give them my food and water.

And after awhile, the New Guinea people started to ask me about the meaning of my actions. It was then I began to tell them about a KIND, LOVING, COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR NAMED JESUS!
I believe our Church has one of the sweetest, most precious names of any Church around……

CHRISTIAN HOPE CHURCH OF CHRIST

I pray that we will always strive to LIVE UP to that name by SHARING THE HOPE OF CHRIST with others. And one of the best ways we can do that is through OUR KINDNESS.

Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Words!

Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In Our Deeds!

And Like Jesus, May We Always Be Kind In our Spirit (by forgiving others, just as God, through Christ, has forgiven you and me!)

*Let us leave this place tonight and get out there and make a difference!*