

Kindness: “Be Kind and Compassionate to One Another”

2 SAMUEL 9; EPHESIANS 2:4-7

Kindness is not looked upon favorably by everyone. There are those who feel that kindness carries a cost they are not prepared to pay. It is too time consuming, too demanding, too likely to interfere with their own plans.

Spirit life, however, insists that kindness is not an inconvenience to be avoided, but a characteristic to be embraced. After all, God has lavished his lovingkindness on us through Christ. As we study David’s example of kindness, we’ll see that it involves treating others with sympathy, benevolence, and generosity. All of these attitudes are essentially practical; none is less than costly.

1. What are some results of kindness that you’ve seen in your life or someone else’s?

READ 2 SAMUEL 9.

2. Why was it important to David to show kindness to Saul's family (verse 1)? (See also 1 Samuel 20:12-17.)
3. Keeping in mind that Saul had been David's mortal enemy, what reasons would David have had for *not* doing this?

What does this action reveal about David's character?

4. Do you think David was just dutifully fulfilling his covenant with Jonathan? What evidence do you find here for your answer?
5. As Jonathan's dear friend and also as king of Israel, what mixed emotions might David have felt when he saw Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth?

6. Why would Mephibosheth have had reason to be afraid of King David?
7. What specific actions did David's kindness lead to (verse 7)?
8. How do you think David's kindness made Mephibosheth feel?
9. What overall aspects and effects of kindness can you glean from this story?

READ EPHESIANS 2:4-7.

10. How has God shown kindness to us? What is his motivation?

✪ 11. In what ways are grace and kindness intertwined?

12. Read Ephesians 4:32 in closing. Is there a current situation in which you are struggling to be kind? What makes it hard for you to be compassionate in this situation?

Pray for a renewed understanding of God's lovingkindness to you, asking the Holy Spirit to help you show this same kindness to others.