



“Kindness”

*Pastor Miles with special guest Shaunti Feldhahan /
May 13, 2018*

Opening Prayer:

Lord, as we open up our hearts, we ask you to reveal to us all those times and people we have treated unkindly. Let this study be the beginning of lasting relationships that reflects the love you have for each and every one of us. Let us treat others with unconditional love and then experience that benefit in all of our relationships. Show us how to love those who are unfair, those who annoy us and those who have hurt or ignored us. Let us speak in truth and love and care about what is in the best interest of others.

Icebreaker:

How did you respond the last time someone was highly annoying, or cut you off in traffic or somehow tested your patience?

Encouragement:

The first thing Shaunti said after a nice introduction by Pastor Miles was that he was "the best encourager ever!"

Write your name at the top of a slip of paper.

Think of something positive that you would like to be well known for. It can be either something you have already done or something 'in progress'. Write it down on that piece of paper. Now hand the paper to the person immediately to your right. Now take turns going around the group in a circle introducing one another using the information on the paper.

Make the introduction like you are announcing someone on a game show. Feel free to 'spice up' the introduction with additional positive comments. (If you don't know your person very well, comment on their smile, their shoes the fact they showed up on time - make it creative but positive).

[Group leader: suggest getting a hairbrush or other similar object to act as a microphone and pass around from M.C. to M.C. After everyone has had a turn, ask how it felt to hear those words upon being introduced to the group? What makes it hard to do something like this more often?]

Scriptures:

Patterns of negativity: Shaunti provided a list of 'spiritual whispers' that happen in our head. Pastor Miles referred to them as tools or activities of the devil. Look at the following list and reflect prayerfully on them.

- * Exasperation
- * Pessimism
- * Criticism
- * Complaining
- * Suspicion
- * Sarcasm
- * Catastrophizing

[Suggest break into groups of 2 or 3]

Read Phil 4:8

Think of a recent example where you used one of the common patterns of negativity. Now meditate on this verse. How could you have been positive in the same situation? Share in your group of 2 or 3.

Read Luke 6:28 and Matt 5:11-12.

Who is speaking in each passage? Compare and contrast those two passages. Have you ever felt blessed by someone cursing you? Have you ever been kind to someone who hates/hated you? What was that like? What would it have been like if you had tried the superhero kindness model? (See notes below)

Prayer:

Think of one person you share in a relationship. It could be a family member, a co-worker, a friend, or a neighbor. Meditate on WHO that person should be to take the 30 day kindness challenge. Pray for courage, the wisdom and strength to take up the challenge and see to it for a full 30 days.

Next Steps:

Take the 30-Day Kindness Challenge. Pick one person with whom you have a relationship. Try this each day for 30 days:

1. **Positivity** - Say nothing negative about your person - either to them or about them to anyone else.
2. **Praise** - Each day find one positive thing you can praise or affirm about that person and tell them and tell someone else.
3. **Kindness** - Each day, do one small action of kindness or generosity for them.

Text "Kindness" to 52525.

You will get a daily reminder during the challenge. Shaunti said that 89% of those who took the challenge reported that their relationships improved.

Notes:

Kindness can make you a superhero. When you have kindness, nobody can offend (hurt) you. Kindness is a superpower!
