

*D GROUP – Life on Life Discipleship for Women of FBC

OUTLINE

Titus 2 for Women, A Heart of Kindness, Part 2

THE ROLE OF WOMEN - OPENING DISCUSSION:

- #1 Share some experiences you had since the last lesson on showing kindness? What was the impact?
- #2 As you look around, do you see some women who are good examples of having a heart of kindness?
- #3 Share about a situation you might, or could have, before you where your kindness might possibly open an opportunity to share the gospel message?

Our study of godly women as revealed in Titus 2:4-5 has brought us to the quality of kindness. Paul tells Titus that the older women are to *encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.* The kind person acts out of goodness, friendliness and generosity **for the benefit of others.** **True kindness is a heart that wants to benefit, build up and encourage other people.** The quality of biblical kindness is not a way someone can appear religious, but a way a believer can share Christ and display His character. God expects Christians to be intentionally kind. We choose to be kind in order to show people who Jesus is.

Our last lesson introduced an acronym by which we can see how God desires women to show kindness: **K**now God's heart; **I**nitiate sacrificial good deeds; **N**urture the needy; and **D**evelop Christ-like discernment. Before looking at the final two parts of our outline, let's recap what we saw in our last lesson.

Know God's Heart He has shown kindness to us in so many ways: He passed over our sins to lead us to repentance; He sent His Son to pay the penalty for our sins. As His children, we now have the Holy Spirit who enables us to show kindness to others. Indeed, it is the expectation for every believer to show kindness since we are recipients of the ultimate kindness through Jesus Christ.

Initiate sacrificial good deeds Kindness is to be shown by the believer in a **radical** way, towards those who are our enemies. It should also be displayed in **practical** acts of helping those who are needy. Kindness is also expected to be **universal**, beginning in the home, then extending to those in the church, as well as those outside the church. Finally, Christians should be **aggressive** in showing kindness, seeking out opportunities where they can help someone else.

Nurture the Needy Godly women love their husbands and children, mentally think things through, remain pure, are focused toward their home, and have a heart to minister to the needy, the poor and hurting. This is the example of the Proverbs 31 woman. Proverbs 31:20 *She extends her hand to the poor; And she stretches out her hands to the needy.* Being poor means being afflicted, humble, lowly and oppressed. The godly woman has so much love to give that her love doesn't stop with her family. Her hands are continually stretched out to anyone in need. But she doesn't have to go to the Mission to help the needy. When she looks down the street, she recognizes a needy neighbor. At church, she glances around and notices someone who is hurting. Whenever she bakes something, this woman makes one extra to give to someone in need—as a witness of Christ's love and kindness. **Read 1 Timothy 5:9-10.** Before a widow is put on the church list to receive support in some way, she should be recognized as someone who has ministered to the needy. In fact, the church supports her in part so she can continue to minister to the needy. The kind widow has a reputation for good works. People will testify that her life has been committed to kind deeds. She raised her own children, demonstrating a life of unselfish giving. She has welcomed strangers, which is an act of kindness. Like a household slave, she has washed the feet of the saints. And she assists the saints who are afflicted. The kind woman is one who not only works for her home, but also works to **display Christ through kind actions.**

What is God's heart toward the ministry to the needy? James 1:27 *This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress.* If we have God's heart, we will be like those in Scriptures described as kind. Dorcas showed her concern for the needy by making garments for them in Acts 9:36-42. Joseph of Arimathea provided Jesus with a tomb for his burial in Luke 23:50. And Barnabas sold a tract of land and gave it to the apostles for the needs of the early church in Acts 4:36-37. All of these were described as *agathos*—people who were kind. Do you have a heart to nurture the needy?

Develop Christ-like Discernment Being kind should never be separated from the truth of God's Word or godly wisdom. In Titus 2:5, kindness must not be separated from sensibility. The God of love, mercy and grace never acts independently from the God of holiness, justice and wrath. Likewise, the "kind" Christian must also be a sensible Christian who will not violate truth or justice. Kindness should never be blind or foolish. Christ-like good deeds will always embrace Christ-like discernment. What do I mean?

Being kind to Christians Don't violate the truth of the God's Word. If kindness is ever expressed contrary to the Scriptures, it is not the kindness of God. It is not what Jesus would do. There are poorly taught Christians and phony "Christians" who think everyone owes them a living. Your kindness to them

can feed their lazy selfishness. God wisely says in 2 Thessalonians 3:10 *if anyone will not work, neither let him eat*. This instruction will keep acts of kindness from being abused.

Don't hinder the growth of another Christian. You cannot spare Christians from the consequences of their sin. You can't prevent every trial. You should never keep Christians from dealing with their own sin. Galatians 6:7 reminds us *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap*. If a Christian steals something from a neighbor, you're not being kind to replace the stolen property yourself. The one who stole the item should return it or pay for it and deal with the consequences. Don't hinder a Christian's growth by your kindness, but stay in balance. Don't forget it's important for Christians to be kind to one another. If you have to make a mistake, be sure to err on the side of grace.

Don't merely say kind things; do kind actions. James 2:14 *What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister [a Christian] is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled', and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.*

Being kind to non-Christians Remember what the Bible says about kindness. In speaking of the kindness of God we read in Romans 2:4 that *the kindness of God leads you to repentance*. And Titus 3:4-5 says, *the kindness of God saved us*. In the passage we have been considering while looking at the godly woman, we are told to *be kind...that the word of God may not be dishonored* (Titus 2:5).

The goal of God's kindness is to bring non-Christians to repentance. And the goal of your kindness to the lost should be the same—to **bring them to repentance**. A discerning Christian tries not to facilitate the sin of others by acts of kindness. Instead of giving money to the homeless, she tries to give food or clothing or fast food gift certificates. As you share a meal, share the gospel and your heart with them. Don't help someone to buy a bottle of wine to enable them to sin by getting drunk. Don't hurt someone with misguided acts of kindness. Don't be deceived into giving away wants, instead of meeting real needs. Kind Christians give food and clothing in the name of Christ, help those who are hurting, share their own possessions with those in need, and many other acts of kindness. Why? In order to point to Christ and lead people to repentance.

What steps can you take to grow in kindness today?

Be a leader in your church family with acts of kindness. Start a ministry at church if you have the ability to give food or clothing to people with a need. Collect it, sort it and develop a way for it to be distributed. Donate a house so your church family can help pregnant teens. Begin a relational ministry to shut-ins, widows and orphans.

Be kind to some. You can't help everyone, but you can help some. Think of a Christian God wants you to show kindness to. Think of a non-Christian God wants you to show kindness to. Then find a way to be kind to them this week. Make a commitment to not walk by when God shows you a person in need. Prepare your car with cans of food or clothes. Put food gift certificates in your purse or wallet. Plan ways to be kind to some.

Be kind in small ways every day and in big ways occasionally. Kindness is one of the qualities that marks a church as uniquely different. Kindness displays Christ to others. All of us can grow in showing kindness at the gathering of the body of Christ. Prepare for church each week by preparing your heart for acts of kindness: in words, gifts, cards, thoughtfulness and small acts to refresh a brother or sister in Christ. All of us need to show kindness in little ways every day, and especially when we gather together.

Be a doer of the Word every day. Sacrificially give something away to a person who needs it. Say something kind to someone; not flattery, but truthful encouragement. Express kindness through an act of physical affection. Not a holy kiss, but more than a handshake or pat on the back. Give a genuine hug of appreciation to a brother or sister in Christ. Natural affection is to be a part of our family and is a part of God's family. Start now, and see what God does in your heart when you express kindness. The heart desires to please Jesus Christ will show itself by being a doer of the Word, not merely a hearer. Practice kindness every single day and especially on Sunday when you gather to worship God.

QUESTIONS for Discipleship Groups

1. Take 1 minute per woman; where each woman is rejoicing and where each woman is battling in being a Titus 2 woman.
2. Make a list of some needy situations where you or a group of women might be able to nurture those in need.
3. How will acts of kindness by the believer help to bring an unbeliever to repentance?

4. KEY: What specific goal can you set for yourself to show kindness to a believer and to an unbeliever this next week?

D group project: Find one or more partners in your D Group that will join with you in showing kindness to others, something that might even develop into an ongoing ministry. Make some plans to meet/discuss during this next week on how you are going to start your project.