

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

OUTLINE

Titus 2 for Women, A Heart of Kindness, Part 1

THE ROLE OF WOMEN - OPENING DISCUSSION:

#1 What effect does showing kindness have on the body of Christ? On the relationships among neighbors? On the relationship between believers and unbelievers? Share some concrete examples you've witnessed.

#2 What problems do people encounter that keeps them from showing kindness to others?

#3 What are some reasons for showing kindness to our family members?

In our study of the character of godly women, we have focused on Titus 2:4-5 which calls the older women 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 world ought to see the quality of kindness in Christian people. But instead, the world most identifies kindness with good people or humanitarians. Today, the kind person is the generous rock star or the do-good politician.

The word translated “kind” in the text of Titus is the Greek word *agathos*, which is translated “good” or “kind” in most of the verses in which it is found. When *agathos* is used to describe a person's character or activity, it takes on a more specific meaning. It means this person is also *fit, capable and useful*. In other words, a person who is kind in the biblical sense is capable of representing Christ. Many people do nice things, but the only truly kind things are those who display Christ. When *agathos* is used to describe someone's activity, this word speaks of a commitment to excellence. This is a person who causes others to benefit from his activities or deeds of kindness. The kind person acts out of goodness, friendliness and generosity **for the benefit of others**. Like Christ, this person has a genuine spirit of compassion, yet also with wisdom and discernment. This type of kindness is not demonstrated so people will think of us as kind. But **true kindness is a heart that wants to benefit, build up and encourage other people**.

Women in Titus' day, and today as well, are to seek out opportunities to be kind. This was a problem for the saints on Crete. Not only did Cretans struggle with being lazy, they didn't think it was necessary to display the change God had brought about in their lives. They didn't think they had to live any different than their society. They thought they only had to ‘believe in Jesus’, pray a prayer, then live like they used to. Paul tells the women in the church on Crete, through Titus, to engage in good works that display God's kindness. Christian homes on Crete needed thinking women who were committed to loving their husbands and children, living morally pure and committed to their home. But the Cretan homes also needed young wives and mothers who were socially kind. The godly woman is to be a gracious, kind and giving demeanor. Her home was to be literally seasoned with kindness, through her words and good deeds.

Using the acrostic **K-I-N-D** we will find out that the Holy Spirit is calling godly women to: **K**now God's heart; **I**nitate sacrificial good deeds; **N**urture the needy; and **D**evelop Christ-like discernment. This lesson will focus on the first two of these points.

Know God's Heart God's heart of kindness is described in a unique way in the book of Romans. In its context, Paul is exposing religious people who accuse others of sinfulness but excuse their own sin. Paul says in Romans 2:4 *Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?* Your life may seem to be going well, but that doesn't mean you are right with God. God is patient, and He has been very kind to you, waiting patiently for you to see your sin. He does not give you good things so you can ignore Him. No, He graciously provides for you so you will turn to Him and depend upon Him alone as the giver of the good things in life. This character quality is so important to God makes it a command us to show kindness in Colossians 3. In this letter, Paul tells us we are complete in Christ. When we are in Christ, Colossians 3:12 says, *“as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you”*. Kindness is a quality we are to put on, like a shirt or blouse. Kindness is one of the most attractive garments in the Christian's closet. We're not to be kind only when we feel like it or when we happen to think about it. The true Christian lives out kindness because it is God's character and He commands we put on His character by the power of the Spirit. But how can we be truly kind when we don't feel like it? There is only one way: **by choosing to live life God's way**; by turning from our independent ways and giving our lives to Jesus Christ to rely upon Him alone. The fruit of the Spirit includes kindness. When you became a Christian, God the Holy Spirit came to live in you. From that point on, God's heart of kindness will begin shining through you in kind deeds you.

Why is kindness important? This character quality is rooted in the character of God. Kindness is part of His glorious heart. Since God is kind, we are to be kind also. **Read Titus 3:4**. The kindness of God sent Christ to the cross to save His children. And it is this same kindness Christians are to show to those who need Christ desperately. Do you know God's heart of kindness? To some degree, every believer who knows God will demonstrate biblical kindness. Kindness is that generous, compassionate act or word directed toward the greatest need of another person. As we grow to know God's heart, we will grow in kindness. When older Christians begin training Christians who are younger in the faith, helping them mature in Christ, then our church will display Jesus Christ in an even greater way by being kind.

Initiate sacrificial good deeds Kindness is initiating sacrificial good deeds to meet the real needs of another. Lots of people do good deeds, but true Christian kindness is different from the kindness of the world. **Biblical kindness leads to radical good deeds.** Religious people and even irreligious people do kind deeds. What's the difference between Christian kindness and regular kindness? **Read Luke 6:27-31.** The Golden Rule is God's standard for kindness, but here, Jesus takes it further. **Read Luke 6:32-34.** Christian kindness is not natural or normal. It is not necessarily easy or convenient or fun. True Christian kindness is supernatural and contrary to everything our society tells us to do toward unloving, selfish, rotten people. The world wants us to treat them in the same manner they treat us. God tells us to treat them like His Son, Jesus—like royalty. **Read Luke 6:34-36.** God says the true test of our kindness is not when people are nice to us, but when they are not. If you are kind when people are cruel to you, then you are truly kind, radically kind, and Christ-like kind. Unless you've shown kindness in hostile situations, you don't know what true Christian kindness is. Kindness is not good deeds reserved only for friends, family, Christians or people in your church. Kindness is not reserved for those who smile and treat you well. When people hate you and are hostile to you, and you respond with kindness, **that is Christ-like kindness.** That is radical kindness!

Not only is initiating kindness to be radical for the godly woman, but it is also to be **practical.** It is the heart of a healthy church. **Read Acts 9:36-42.** This passage shows us that Christian kindness is initiating sacrificial good deeds even when the recipient of our good deeds can never repay us. Dorcas was a woman was known for her continual deeds of kindness, putting her sewing skills to use and donated the clothing she made to people in need. This was the pattern of her life, the core of her character. You demonstrate kindness by initiating good deeds in a practical way, using your talents, time and treasure to help people who are needy. Where? **Kindness starts at home.** In Titus 2:5, the word “kind” is connected to a list of character traits: sensible, pure, a worker at home, kind, subject to your own husband. In this text, God placed the character quality of kindness in between being a worker at home and being subject to your husband. Kindness must begin at home, toward the people in your own family. **Read Galatians 6:9-10.** “Do good to all men”, in Galatians 6:10 is this same Greek word, translated “**kindness**” in Titus 2:5. Kindness is especially important in the family of God. Whenever we fellowship together, in corporate worship, in small groups, when you pass another Christian on the street, we need to show kindness to our brothers and sisters in Christ. What's fun about the command to be kind is the opportunity to show kindness through our strengths and talents. Kindness can be shown by making cards, giving flowers from your garden, baking cookies, lending a helping hand, writing a letter, sharing kind words or whatever is most enjoyable for you to do for others. The world should marvel at the kindness with which Christians treat one another.

But this kindness is also to be **universal:** God calls Christians to show kindness inside the family of God, and in the world as well. Galatians 6:10 reminds us *while we have opportunity, let us do good* [be kind] **to all men.** Be kind to people at work, at school and in your neighborhood. Be kind when you drive your car. Be kind to strangers. Do these people see the kindness of God in your selfless attitude toward them? Only if a Christian initiates an act of towards them.

Finally, Christian kindness in a godly woman is also **aggressive.** **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15.** Christians are to seek after, or literally, eagerly pursue after, what is kind toward others. The Bible pressures us to pursue doing good deeds. What does this look like? It is reaching out to a new visitor at church with the love of Christ, walking them to their children's class, sitting with them during the service and taking them to lunch afterward. It is helping a distressed traveler on the highway, assisting someone who is lonely or hurting financially, or sacrificing your time and effort to help out when help is needed right away. It is saying encouraging words to one who is discouraged. It is watching out for the elderly, offering to assist them, carry heavy items for them, to help them in their homes or sacrificing your time to visit them when they need company.

In our next lesson we will continue to see how Biblical kindness is displayed in the godly Christian woman through nurturing the needy and developing Christ-like discernment.

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. What might happen if you practice the “radical” kindness that is described in this lesson?
3. Name some acts of kindness that you could easily put into practice because of your natural talents.

4. KEY: What will you specifically do this next week to show your acts of kindness in your home and neighborhood? Towards believers, and towards unbelievers?

D group project: Be accountable to someone in your D group this week for showing kindness. Share with them how you will show kindness and then make contact with them during the week.