

Relational Health, Wellness, Wholeness

BE KIND, BE TENDERHEARTED,
BE FORGIVING

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Monday, August 30, 2021

Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 3:8

STUDY & REFLECTION

From our previous studies and commitment to Eph 4:32 we have seen the power of relating to others with intentional words and acts of Kindness. Kindness is an attitude and perspective that orders our relationship with others. It connotes a spirit that is pleasing to others so that when we approach they anticipate grace and goodness emanating from our hearts toward them.

We also see in the same passage God calling for us to add another dimension to this spirit and attitude of kindness. The King James translation calls it being '**tenderhearted!**'

The Greek word is translated as the same word used to describe the reaction of Jesus to the frail and wounded multitude in Matt chapter 9. He was '**moved with compassion.**'

It describes His response to their condition as one of sympathy and sensitivity. From deep in His heart He was so aware of the fragility and vulnerability of their condition, that He related to it personally and was motivated to do whatever it took to heal them and make them healthy and whole. In other words, this type of compassion or tenderheartedness combines an awareness (sensitivity to their plight), that generates a feeling (relating to and sympathetic to their need) that drives one to an action (moves you to do something to alleviate the need)!

ACTION ITEMS

Being truly tenderhearted is therefore a dynamic progression that starts with a keen sense of awareness or appreciation of the plight of another, generating a feeling that places one in the others' shoes, and moves you to do something meaningful to address their need.

Having this understanding, seek the Lord, asking Him to make you genuinely tenderhearted. **Then deliberately embrace it to the point of demonstrating it to others this week.**

INVOLVING OTHERS

Share your experience with your small group with transparency and honesty. Don't be afraid to share where and when you struggle in your endeavor to be tenderhearted to others. Pray with and for one another to add this spiritual dynamic to your practice of healthy relationships.

Relational Health, Wellness, Wholeness

BE KIND, BE TENDERHEARTED II, BE FORGIVING

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Tuesday, August 31, 2021

Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 3:8;

Matthew 5:43-44

STUDY & REFLECTION

Now we are delving deeply into what the Bible describes as having and demonstrating healthy, mature, spiritual relationships. The passages for today in Ephesians and 1 Peter clearly mandate that such relationships are expected and in fact should be increasingly normal among the people of God as we grow in Christ. However, these relationships do not include a critical category of those we interact with on a regular basis....what about those we do not get along with—those who could be seen as our ‘enemies!’

Let’s hear from Jesus Himself in Matthew 5:43-44: *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;* (KJV)

Whoa!! Is this possible? Could we really be required, even expected to be kind to those who we know have not been kind to us? Is it reasonable for us to reach out to those who have hurt or misused us in the past, to think of them and speak and act toward them with kindness and compassion?

This is not humanly possible. This challenge forces us to consider whether we can of ourselves, think of, speak to, and act toward others in kindness and genuine sensitivity. This can only be achieved to the degree we are willing to listen and learn.

This will happen only to the degree that we by faith, surrender to the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit in our daily living.

Loving, being kind and sensitive to those who love us is one thing, loving and being kind and sensitive to those who mean us no good is another!!

ACTION ITEMS

You know the drill. Identify those who you have not gotten along with. Identify those who you do not like. What are you willing to do to begin to create with them a relationship of kindness and compassion? **Are you willing to pray in earnest, ask help of others, and then deliberately reach out to your enemies in kindness and compassion?**

INVOLVING OTHERS

Be bold. Be courageous. Share with those in your small group where you are in this commitment to be kind and compassionate to those who you have found to be less than friends. Don’t let the past dictate your future.

Miracles happen as we dare to reach out it Faith!

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SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Wednesday, September 1, 2021

Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 6:12;

Matthew 6:14-15

STUDY & REFLECTION

Our core scripture here in Ephesians gives to us a challenging commandment of the Lord that we must embrace with faith and confidence, not in ourselves, but in His power and grace if we are to have any chance of fulfilling it. Let's listen to it with our hearts open and surrendered to His Will: **"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you!"** (NIV)

What a description of how we are to develop and maintain healthy relationships with each other. How different these directives are compared with how we usually deal with one another. We are taught as children of the Living God, under the direction and power of His Spirit, we are to be Kind, Tenderhearted, and Forgiving in our relationship with one another.

Jesus in His powerful Sermon on the Mount speaks to the same subject with further clarity. He instructs us that when we pray, we should ask God to forgive us, **and that we should expect to be forgiven, only if we have forgiven those who have sinned against us!**

We have already learned in our studies, that to live among others will result in conflict. We cannot escape it. But the question is, how are we to deal with it? Every one of us can no doubt remember when we have felt wronged by another. Often, we were sure that the wrong was willful and deliberate. *When it happened, what did we do? How did we respond to it? How often did we address it and find reconciliation? Is this even reasonable?*

The Word instructs us that if a rift exists, we must be diligent and move quickly to clarify what happened, come to agreement with our brother or sister, forgive, and reconcile.

ACTION ITEMS

Be reflective and take inventory of how and or if you usually address situations that cause a break or negative feelings between you and others. What usually occurs when something goes wrong between you and another with whom you have been walking in fellowship? On a scale of 1-10, how often do such encounters get addressed to where the relationship is stronger and the fellowship strengthened? How clear are you regarding what it means to forgive?

INVOLVING OTHERS

You will need to process your action items with those in your small group. Share with each other your levels of confidence and willingness to address issues of conflict and to what degree each of you are able to bring forgiveness and healing to these situations.

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BE KIND, BE TENDERHEARTED, BE FORGIVING II

SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY Thursday, September 2, 2021

Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 6:12;

Matthew 6:14-15; Mark 11:25

STUDY & REFLECTION

Have we made the mistake that we often make as we try to embrace and apply with obedience, those things that the Lord commands us? That is, have we *Biblically* defined and understood what we are asked to do, before we attempt to do it?

What does it mean to FORGIVE?

There is a saying that “to err is human, to forgive is Divine!” That has some merit. One sure way we understand forgiveness is to use the Lord as our example. **He FORGIVES!**

As we see in our text scriptures, we are directed over and over again to forgive....on the basis that God has forgiven us! How does God forgive? What does He do in reference to our sins? When He forgives, does He forget what we did? No, that is not possible. But in both Isa 43:25 and Jer 31:34 He declares that He will....REMEMBER OUR SINS NO MORE!

To forgive in Biblical language means to dismiss, to pardon, to let go, to release, to set something free, to wipe out the debt. When God forgives He promises to not bring up what you and I did again. It will no longer be held against us or cause damage or hurt to the relationship. This is what we are to do, this is how we are to forgive each other, empowered by our faith in God’s Word.

The Lord Himself in the passage in Mark 11 says, “*when you stand praying...FORGIVE!*” We are to let go of the malice. We are to reject any feelings of bitterness. We are to let go of any resentment.

This type of forgiveness is not easy and often painful. It is not one way. Remember we are to “forgive one another!” This is a mutual, cooperative spiritual dynamic where children of God value the relationship to the extent that you are willing to be humble and gracious in order to bring about healing and reconciliation.

ACTION ITEMS

I challenge you to start on the road of genuine forgiveness. Who do you feel has wronged you? Will you seek the Lord sincerely in prayer, asking Him to give you the grace and courage you need to forgive? Are you willing to care-front the person, going to them in love with the intent to bring about healing and restoration of the relationship?

FORGIVEN PEOPLE MUST BECOME FORGIVING PEOPLE!

INVOLVING OTHERS

Don’t be afraid to admit it. Lack of forgiveness, an unforgiving spirit may have become a spiritual stronghold in your life. Don’t be discouraged, Satan has not won. You have fellow saints who will help you in prayer, and will come alongside so that the Holy Spirit will cause transformation to happen in your soul. Be bold.

Be courageous. Be Healed.

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SCRIPTURES OF THE DAY

Ephesians 4:32; John 13:35

Friday, September 3, 2021 &

Saturday, September 4, 2021

STUDY & REFLECTION

Our text scriptures boldly declare for and to us what it means to be Christ's disciples. As we by faith embrace them we send a message to this evil world, and at the same time declare boldly to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. By doing this, Spiritual Transformation is personified.

Here are your assignments for the next two days, and beyond.....

ACTION ITEMS

BE KIND: Live so graciously among one another, allowing the Spirit of Christ to manifest itself, so that when others see you coming, they will feel joy and genuine hope, because your presence always enriches and does good for those you interact with. Learn to intentionally speak words into the lives of others that do them good and benefit their lives. Deliberately do acts of kindness to all, causing their burden to be lighter and their faith stronger.

BE TENDERHEARTED: Be sensitive to the plight of others. Before you judge or come to a conclusion about someone or their situation, seek to be aware of what they are going through. This level of compassion is genuine sensitivity that causes you to relate to them as if you are in the same condition, and causes you to pay whatever it costs to make their lives better.

BE FORGIVING: To err is human...To forgive Divine. **You have been Forgiven....FORGIVE!**

The truth of the gospel is that Christ suffered and died for our sins. He who knew no sin, became sin for us. He willingly laid down His life for us, the Just for the unjust. He paid the full price for your sin and mine, earning Him the right to forgive us of our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What a debt He paid.What a debt we owe.

To BE FORGIVING means to love those who hate you. It means to do good to them who do evil against you, and to pray for them who *despitefully* use you.

To Be Forgiving is to be like Christ.

INVOLVING OTHERS

For the next two days and beyond, put in practice with your small group what you have learned about Being Kind, Being Compassionate, and Being Forgiving.

