

IT'S **NOT** YOUR  
**BIRTHDAY**



## Week #3: "Broad, Wet Shoulders"

*How Do We Love Kindness?*

### Daily Readings and Devotionals for November 11-16, 2019

#### **Monday, November 11 Read Psalm 25**

The psalmist prays a prayer familiar to us all: "Help me God and please don't hold my failings against me!" At its heart we are asking God to extend to us an undeserved kindness, which Christ's love embodies fully. What does this tell us about God? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it tell us about ourselves and the relationships God expects from us? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do we often have trouble responding with God-graciousness when someone has failed or wronged us? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Tuesday, November 12 Read 1 John 3:11-24**

True kindness and mercy is driven by love, but love is not mere emotion. According to this passage, what is the nature of love and what are some of the ways we can cultivate it? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is sacrifice so essential to love? \_\_\_\_\_

As we move towards the Advent and Christmas seasons, what are some concrete ways you might practice love and kindness? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Wednesday, November 13 Read Matthew 25:31-46**

According to this passage, what is the ultimate standard by which we will be judged? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ If we are saved by faith, however, doesn't this seem to be a demand for works? Look back at yesterday's reading, especially vv. 18-22 for a possible answer.

What are some ways that you as an individual and we as a church might better focus on what Jesus actually wants



**Thursday, November 14 Read Colossians 3:1-17**

Don't be overwhelmed by the things we're told to avoid here. Focus on the actual actions we are called to take in vv.12-17. Reflect on some concrete ways we can do these things as a church and as individuals. Where might God be calling you to show leadership for your brothers and sisters? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Discuss this with God in prayer today.

**Friday, November 15 Read Luke 6:27-38**

Let's be honest. These teachings often sound wildly impractical if not absolutely impossible for us to actually practice. Perhaps that's why so many nominal Christians don't even try. How can we take these commandments seriously and what are some ways we might actually practice them? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Are there some small steps of mercy and kindness you need to take- and can take- in your own life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Discuss this with God in prayer today.

**Saturday, November 16 Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8**

Notice that in this familiar passage, love is not an *emotion*, but rather a *choice* made in response to events and circumstances we experience daily. If we are called to love God and love neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40), what would that look like in light of this passage and the rest of your readings from this week? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Why is a close and dependent relationship with God vitally necessary if we are to be faithful to this call? \_\_\_\_\_

Sermon Notes for:  
**"Broad, Wet Shoulders"**  
November 10, 2019  
*Matthew 9:1-12*

1. **Kindness is about seeing the true needs of the other and graciously meeting them.**
2. **The truth is, we are all "sick" and need Jesus more than anything else that can be offered!**

# Small Group Discussion Guide

for Week #3

November 11-17



## Part I: Sharing Our Experience of Christmas

1. Why do you think the Christmas/Advent season is so stressful for so many? With your group, list some of the things that elevate stress and dissention this time of year.
2. Read 1 John 3:11-24 and discuss the questions from Tuesday with your group.

## Part II. How Do We “Love Kindness?”

1. Read Micah 6:6-8 out loud then share the following with your group: “In v.8 the phrase “love kindness” is translated from the Hebrew word *hesed*. The word means more than a passive appreciation for kind acts but is used primarily (over 300 times in the Old Testament) to describe God and God’s relentless love, forgiveness, grace and steadfastness. Some English translations use ‘love mercy’ while an others use ‘loving-kindness.’ The Message paraphrase sums it up this way: ‘be compassionate and loyal in your love.’”
  - *On a previous Sunday we suggested that to “do justice” is to remove the barriers between God and people and between people themselves. How does this understanding of “love kindness” build on that concept?*
  - *What is the difference between being polite, being pleasant and loving kindness (hesed)?*
2. Read Matthew 9:1-13 and discuss the following questions:
  - *What does Jesus see as the problem for both the paralytic and the scribes? What does this say about our own condition?*
  - *What is Jesus saying the Pharisees need to learn in v.13? What does that phrase mean in real, concrete, daily living terms? Give some examples from your own life.*