

PATH Sept. 9 - 15 2018

Theme: This week we will look at a Scripture that is both extremely practical and profound. It is life changing. It is a Scripture that was presented to the kids at FCA at Sulphur Springs and one that certainly challenges us as followers of Christ at any age.

Ephesians 4:32 - Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Monday - Read 2 Samuel 9.

Kindness, it sounds like one of those words from a Pass It On commercial, and Paul in Ephesians 4 certainly tells us to pass it on. God has been kind to us in Christ Jesus so we should be kind to one another. David displayed this very thing in 2 Samuel 9 when he reached out and showed kindness to Mephibosheth. He cared about him and he loved him, not because of what Mephibosheth could do or his abilities, but he simply loved him for who he was. This was a pointing forward to what Jesus did for us. Mephibosheth was lame, and we are crippled by our sins. Mephibosheth did nothing to earn David's kindness, David was just kind. We cannot earn God's love, He just loves us. It is His grace on display, and now Paul tells us that the challenge is to show that kind of kindness to other people. We are to be kind whether they deserve it or not. We are to care whether they deserve it or not. After all that is what Jesus has done for us, and now we are called to live as Jesus lived. To be kind to people simply because of who they are, people that the Bible says are created in the image of God. Take time today to thank God for His kindness and be kind to everyone that you come in contact with.

Tuesday - Read Ephesians 2:10

There is a saying that says, be kind to everyone that you meet because you don't know what type of battle they are fighting. There is a tremendous amount of truth in those words. The person that was rude to you on the road might have just had an argument with their husband. The person who didn't speak to you may be dealing with a family emergency. The person who commented something rude on your social media page may not know where their next meal is coming from, and the list could go on and on. Everyone is struggling, and in the midst of the struggle a little kindness can go a long way. In fact kindness might even diffuse the situation. Kindness might change a person's day, and in reality kindness might change a person's heart. The Bible says that God has good works prepared in advance for us to do. Some of the good works may be acts of kindness and as we display kindness (even in hard situations or when the person deserves something besides kindness) we may totally transform that person's day, which in reality will affect how they treat other people. Yet even more importantly an act of kindness could open up the door for you to share Jesus with the person. After all we are to display kindness because that is what Jesus did for us on the cross. So an act of kindness may change a person's attitude, it may change a person's day, but more importantly it may help change a person's eternity. With that in mind who do you need to be kind to today? Ask God to show you and to give you the opportunity and the courage.

Wednesday - Read John 19:25-27

Dictionary.com defines tenderhearted as a person who is easily moved to love. In other words a tenderhearted person puts the needs of others above their own. A tender hearted person is not selfish but they are selfless, and there is a tremendous difference. When I think about tenderhearted I think

about Jesus on the cross, what does He say? In one instance He sees His mother and His friend, and HE says, behold your son and behold your mother. In other words HE is hanging on the cross and He is suffering immensely but His focus is not on Himself, instead it is on other people. Jesus is tenderhearted as He sees His mother and thinks about the struggles she is going to have. He is tenderhearted as He sees His friend and thinks about the struggles he is going to have. Jesus isn't thinking about himself, there on the cross He is still thinking about and loving other people. In fact He is so concerned about them that He basically places them into a family together. He doesn't want them to be alone. Jesus is tenderhearted which means even as He hurting He is still caring about other people. Even on the cross He is still putting other people's needs above His own. Take time today to ask God to convict you of your selfishness, then repent and ask Him to change you.

Thursday - Read Matthew 18:21-22

We are called not only to be kind and tenderhearted but we are called to forgive. Usually when forgiveness is brought up it is followed by well that is easier said than done. And it really is. It is hard to forgive, yet that is what we are commanded to do. We are to forgive other people. The ones who have hurt us, the ones who have said something to us, the ones who have hurt people that we love. We are called to forgive, and not just to forgive once or twice, but to forgive 70 x 7. In other words we are called to forgive to the moon and back. We are called to forgive to infinity and beyond (some of you will get the Toy Story reference). We are to be people of forgiveness. Why? Because Jesus first forgave us. If we have been forgiven by the one who took our place and took our punishment then we literally have no right to be unforgiving towards anybody else. So the question becomes who do you need to forgive? There is a name in front of you, there is a face in your minds eye. Who do you need to forgive? Ask God for the strength and for the love to forgive them right now.

Friday - Read John 19

Paul doesn't just tell us what to do, he gives us the why of what we do. We should be kind, we should be tenderhearted, we should be people of forgiveness. Why? Because God in Christ has forgiven us. Read the story of the crucifixion today, and realize that Jesus went to that cross for you. He became the curse so you could be blessed. HE took the wrath of the Father for your sins so you didn't have to. Think about the sins that put Him there. Don't think about other peoples think about yours, and then take time to simply be thankful. Take time to worship Jesus for what He did and pray and ask Him to transform your heart and make you a person who is kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving. Ask Him to make you more like Jesus as you live for the glory of God.