



elev8

life on another level

Student Workbook

YEAR 2

Life and Action

Kindness

Bible Readings

Ruth 1 & 2

Matthew 25:31-46

Luke 10:25-37



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this week you will be able to:

- Locate the theme of “kindness” in the Bible.
- Express the theme or story in your own way.
- Apply your learning from the story to your own family and community.

Notes from Bible Reading

Scripture A word or phrase that stood out to me:

Observation What is happening in this Bible reading?

Application Something that I learned about who I am or how I should live:

Prayer What I would like to say to God, ask of God, or what I think God is saying to me:

Key Question What does the Bible say about kindness?

Engage

Go around the group and share one thing for each heading that has happened since you last met:

- Plus – What has been good or enjoyable?
- Minus – What has been difficult or painful?
- Interesting – What has been unusual or thought provoking?

What charities are you willing to support (e.g. 40 Hour Famine, Salvos, Medicins Sans Frontieres, etc) and which ones would you definitely not?

Why and why not?

Explore – Locate

- *What stood out to you in the Bible readings this week?*
- *What did you find meaningful or significant?*
- *Is there anything that you didn't understand or found confusing?*
- *Any questions or comments you may have?*

Read together: Matthew 25: 31-46

The word kindness can mean a few different things. The focus we've chosen here is on helping others that aren't as capable of managing themselves when you have a choice not to help them.

The issue of choice is of course a tricky one. Is a kind person someone who always helps out the needy? Can you be a truly kind person if you refuse to help some people some times? Can helping people actually lead to their lives being worse? What sort of help is acceptable and what is not?

The Ruth passages tell the story of a young widow leaving her familiar home town to help out her mother-in-law, and of a wealthy landowner who shows kindness to both of them. A kind girl meets a kind boy story during a time of famine... I wonder how it ends.

The other two passages are stories told by Jesus.

The first one (Matthew 25) is set in the far future and has everyone judged for how they behaved in life. What criteria are used to judge those worthy and unworthy? Who are the people that Jesus values most by this

criteria? What were the reactions of the people who are worthy and unworthy to his criteria? Does Jesus take into account what the people said they believed? How would you currently rate by these criteria?

The other story (Luke 10) follows on a conversation with someone wanting to know how he could qualify for eternal life. Notice the clarification the guy asks, and Jesus' reply is similar to what we covered in the theme of family as redefined by Jesus in the New Testament. Although we are pretty used to the term 'good Samaritan' these days, it was considered an oxymoron in that day (which is why it is so memorable now) - that is two words that are contradictory. Like 'caring terrorist'.

The story has 4 main characters. A Jewish guy beaten up, a Jewish priest (a spiritual leader), a Levite (an assistant to the priest and fellow Jew) and a Samaritan (a group of people the Jews considered inferior and so treated very badly - it's ok, their government allowed them to bag them out and discriminate against them, and vice versa).

The idea is that if anyone was going to help it would be the fellow Jews, or at least those that are considered holy and spiritual leaders of God. Now notice it doesn't go into the reasons why they helped or didn't (there's lots of justifiable reasons why each should or shouldn't help). The focus was on their final choice and actions.

Explore – Integrate

Read through Matthew 25:31-46

Then imagine there is a line in the middle of the room and act out where you would be if this story were true.

Discuss why Jesus uses these criteria as the only ones to separate people.

Think of the people you know and put them on the relevant half of the room. Does it surprise you to think of where you and others would be if this was the criteria? Is that similar to the reactions of those in the story? Do you think all Jesus believers/followers live this out in their lives? Why or why not?

Have a discussion about helping others using the following questions as your starting points:

- Is it always good to help out someone in need?
- Are there any times or ways of helping that might actually be unhelpful for people needing or asking for help? (e.g. people who struggle with drugs in their lives)
- How much should you sacrifice in order to help others?
- Is there a limit of help you as an individual can give?
- How do you decide that limit?
- What sort of help are you willing to give and what sort are you not willing to give?

Explore – Integrate

What do you currently sacrifice for others? Do you give money regularly or occasionally to worthy causes? Do you need to start giving or increase your giving?

Who are the needy around you, or in society, or the world that you seem to keep noticing? How are you currently helping, or how can you help them, directly or indirectly?

The Bible is less concerned about the dollar value of your contributions, but how much you actually care and notice the needy in actions.

So even if you can't give a lot, still think about making a start or increasing what you give or donating your time and efforts.

Extend

Discuss with your group the challenges you are tackling. Use the time to ask for any help you might need or to work together on any shared projects that you have.

Questions that may be helpful include:

- What challenges are you working on at the moment?
- Do you need any support or assistance?
- Are there any challenges that you have completed that we need to recognise and celebrate?
- Are there any new challenges that you want to work on?

Encourage

Tell another student in your group something you value or appreciate about them.

Share one thing you would like to pray for and pray for one another.

Finish with this prayer;

Loving God,

I pray that the Lord continually opens my eyes to the needy around me and for my heart to be broken by the things that break God's heart.

I thank God for what I have to survive and help me be more content with what I do have.

Help me to see where I can help and give me the strength and wisdom to offer what I can.

Amen