

Home Group study: week beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

### **Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness**

What acts of kindness have members of the group experienced?

How did that act of kindness affect them?

#### **Read: Luke 6: 30-36**

In Luke 6: 30 Jesus says: 'Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.' How might we put this word into practice? Is it realistically possible? How might we feel about someone who 'takes what belongs to you'?

Verses 32-34 seem very harsh. What do you think of what Jesus is saying here? Is he suggesting it's wrong to 'love those who love you' or to 'do good to those who are good to you'?

Who are your enemies? How can we begin to love them? How does God react to us when we achieve it? Verse 36 tells us to be 'merciful'. Is that the same thing as being kind?

#### **Understanding**

Kindness, says, Selwyn Hughes, 'is not a false sentimentality or foolish indulgence'. Do you agree? How might you define 'foolish indulgence'? At what point does 'giving to everyone who asks you' tip into 'foolish indulgence'?

It's sometimes said you have to be cruel to be kind. In what circumstances should you not 'give to everyone who asks you'? And why not?

Morris's *Homespun English Dictionary* defined kindness as 'An act of blessing or love freely and selflessly given out of generosity to another individual or individuals who may not necessarily deserve it or have earned it, made with no requirement or expectation of anything in return.' Would you agree with this definition? How often are we kind to people who don't deserve it? What sort of things might we expect in return for kindness? Does that expectation make our kindness worthless?

#### **Application**

Caroline Flack, before her tragic and untimely death, famously tweeted: 'In a world where you can be anything, be kind.' Jeremiah 9: 24 tells us: 'I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,' declares the LORD.

Kindness is greatly valued by the world and by God too. Think about ways we can be more kind (and less *unkind*) in our lives. Think too how we can be made kind by the Holy Spirit and in what ways we need to 'clothe (y)ourselves with... kindness' (Colossians 3: 12).

Sometimes we are put off being kind to people because we don't trust them and think they might not be genuine. There is a story of lesson of the Argentinian golfer Robert de Vincenzo, one of the top five Argentinian sportsmen of the 20th century (up there with Diego Maradona and racing driver Fangio). He was walking back to his car after winning a golf tournament and a woman approached him with a story about her dying baby and how she had no money for the baby's treatment. He gave the woman his winnings. A week later the officials from the golf tournament quizzed him about this, and told him the woman was well-known and was a fraud. De Vincenzo's response was 'you mean there wasn't a sick baby? That's the best news I've heard all week!'

How do we react to that story? What does it say about our attitude to kindness?