

## Life on the Vine

### Kindness

August 3, 2014

*"...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*

(Galatians 5:22-23, TNIV)

#### Characteristics of true kindness

1. In Scripture, God's kindness and his \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ are often connected.
2. In our world, kindness tends to be more \_\_\_\_\_,  
whereas, in the Bible, kindness has far more  
\_\_\_\_\_ aspects associated with it.
3. In our culture, kindness is motivated by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, true kindness is  
completely \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Obstacles to true kindness

1. Embracing \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ = "I don't \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Pursuing \_\_\_\_\_ = "I did it my way."
3. Developing \_\_\_\_\_.

#### I cultivate true kindness in my life when...

1. ...I \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_.
2. ...I \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ...I learn to \_\_\_\_\_ to others.

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### Reflect and Respond

- Reflect on your own life and the way you narrate your own life story. How important are others to that story?

Imagine telling your life story without reference to anyone else other than yourself. How much of your story could you tell? How interesting would it be? What does such an exercise tell us about self-sufficiency and autonomy?

- Think about how you have helped others in the past week or so. Was your act of kindness more transactional in nature (doing for), or was it based more on relational aspects (doing with)?

What is easier: transactional (doing for) or relational (doing with) acts of kindness? Why?

- Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. What does Paul teach us about our need for each other?
- What gifts and abilities has God given you that might be used to help someone else?
- Is there something right now that you might need help with? Who will you reach out to for that help?
- How are you doing as a “listener?” What kinds of things keep us from becoming good listeners? Make it a point today to practice the art of listening.

*The Lord has shown you what is good.  
He has told you what he requires of you.  
You must treat people fairly.  
You must love\* others faithfully.  
And you must be very careful to live  
the way your God wants you to.*

(Micah 6:8, NIV)

\*The word “love” in the verse above  
is the same Hebrew word that is translated as “kindness”  
throughout the Old Testament.

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