

IN A WORLD OF LAWLESSNESS “BE KIND”

Matthew 24:12

Introduction

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- I. The World of Lawlessness – Psalm 2:1-2
 - A. Wickedness Will Increase – Isaiah 5:20-21
 - B. Love Will Grow Cold – Matthew 24:12

- II. The Way of Kindness – Philippians 2:15-16
 - A. Embrace God’s Kindness – Ephesians 3:18-19, Romans 5:5, 1 John 4:19
 - B. Express God’s Kindness – Psalm 82:3, Proverbs 14:21, Luke 3:11, James 1:27, 1 John 3:17
 - C. Embody God’s Kindness – Matthew 5:14-16

Conclusion

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Getting Started

1. Get-to-know-you game: “**Who Am I?**” Have each person write *three* interesting facts about him/herself. Collect the cards and read the statements aloud. Try to guess who it is.
2. Work the Circle: If you were able to choose a particular talent/ability to have, what would it be and why (examples might be: Olympic athlete, professional golfer, pop singer, most patient person in the world, etc.)?
3. What is your favorite childhood memory or family tradition?

Going Deeper

There are two major factors that determine how comfortable we are with relationships and community: Openings and Closings.

- **Opening Experiences** - *Times in our lives when important people have treated us with love, care, respect, and dignity.*
- **Closing Experiences** - *Episodes in our lives when we've been hurt by important people.*

1. What are some examples of both openings and closings? Do they have to be big and obvious, or can they be smaller and more subtle? When have you seen someone experience an opening? A closing?

2. When you think about openings and closings, which experience has impacted you the most? How does this influence your willingness to move toward another person in friendship? Why is that?

3. Read Genesis 1:27. What does it mean to be made in the “image” of God? In what way can we share His image with others? How might we choose to *hide* His image? Describe a person you know who models God’s image well

4. Read Psalm 133. What does this passage say regarding living out God’s image with other people? Have you experienced a relationship like this? Talk about that relationship a little bit

Throughout history, castles have been seen as the “heart” of a country. To protect their country’s heart, rulers would build walls around their castles—and then surround the wall with a moat. The only way to access the castle was if someone opened the drawbridge.

5. When it comes to connecting relationally with people, where is your drawbridge – all the way up, halfway down, or all the way down? In other words, how would you rate your openness to others right now?

Applying the Message

1. *Groups that go well do so because they’ve made a commitment to each other.* What does it mean to make a commitment to another person? What about to a group of people? What barriers could keep you from being able to commit to this small group right now?

2. The next step for you is to work through the Covenant—as a group.