



Connect

Story Time!

Watch or read the story: "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein

Watch

(original illustrations, animated)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFQZfeHq9wo>

(story adaptation, animated in color)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOGMzGDEQoU>

Read the book

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/370493.The_Giving_Tree

<https://www.fullybookedonline.com/book-the-giving-tree-hardcover-shel-silverstein.html>

After reading or watching , talk about it:

Did you like the story?

Would you like to have a friend like the Giving Tree? What about the tree did you like or did not like? Would you like to be a friend like the Giving Tree?

The Giving tree can be an example of how we can show kindness to others. Let's read what the Bible says.

Read the Word

Ephesians 4:31-32

*31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.
32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

It's easy to be kind to people who are lovable and kind to us. But can we also be kind to people who are unlovable and unkind to us?

Jesus taught us a wonderful lesson on being kind and merciful. In Luke 19, he was invited as a guest in the home of a chief tax collector named Zacchaeus who was disliked by many because he always cheated them of their money. The people wondered why Jesus would want to relate with a man like Zacchaeus, to visit and dine at his home. Zacchaeus felt Jesus' kindness for him, and this made him change and give half his money to the poor and make it up with the people he cheated.

Through this story, Jesus modeled the kindness and forgiveness he wants us to have for others no matter what mistakes and annoyance or pain they may have caused us. He wants us to do the same especially to those people who are hard for us to forgive..

In Ephesians 4:31-32, we are called to do 2 things:

STOP:

Get rid of all hard feelings, anger and rage. Stop all fighting and lying. Don't have anything to do with any kind of hatred.

START:

Be kind and tender to one another. Forgive one another, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done.

To be kind also means to forgive.. even when it's hard. Jesus calls us not to be unkind to those who have done us wrong but instead show compassion, mercy, forgiveness especially to people who may be wrong.

Jesus showed us how to "go the opposite spirit". Make a U-turn and love them by showering them back with kindness. You see, Jesus forgives us too, even when we have done wrong things.

Jesus's motivation for being kind was love. Let us grow in the character of Jesus because when we are kind, we honor God.



Parent to Kid/s

2-6 years old

- If you have the last piece of candy or cookie, will you be willing to give it to your classmate or friend who does not have any snack?

7-12 years old

- Do you know a person who has said or done anything unkind to you (or to other people)? Think of what you can do for that person that is opposite to the unkind act that he or she has done.

Kid/s to Parent:

- Was there any person you showed kindness to even when the person was mean or has said unfair things about you? Share about it. How did you feel? What did you do?

Try to think of the most vicious villain in your favorite series or movie and think of whether it's easy or not to act kindly towards this villain when he/she fights with the movie's hero. That's tough!

But whether it's tough or not, the Bible encourages us to "Be Kind!" Remember that:

Kindness = compassionate, merciful, forgiving

We show kindness to others not because they have been kind to us. We show kindness because that is a command from God and He has been kind to us even when we did not deserve it.

As a challenge, think of an act of kindness that you can do for a person today (yes, even if the person you think of has done wrong things) and act on it. Do the same thing tomorrow and the next day. Keep doing it until it becomes a habit.



Dear God, teach me to be kind like Jesus. Please help me to forgive those who have done wrong things. I want to be more like Jesus. Please help me improve and be kind to everyone so that You will be honored and pleased. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.



Jesus is probably the kindest person in the Bible. He showed kindness to people even if they did not treat others well, like Zaccheaus, as mentioned above. He showed kindness to people who had done bad things, like the Samaritan woman (John 4:4-14). He also showed kindness by healing people like in Matthew 8:1-4 and Luke 8:40-48. But most of all, he showed kindness by forgiving those who have hurt him (Luke 22:47-52) and he forgave us by dying on the cross in our place.

What lesson on kindness have you learned from Jesus that you can show others?