

## **Children's Moment** *Show We Care: Kindness part 2*

Good morning, girls and boys. We're continuing our lesson on caring for others through kindness.

How many times were you kind to someone last week? Maybe you were kind once. That's a good start. Maybe you were kind 2 or 3 times. You're on the way. Maybe you were kind every day. Wow, if that's true, you're a very caring person!

People who care are kind and considerate. They care about other people. They care about animals. They care about our environment. They want all of them to be well, just the way God made them to be.

The teachers at Shimek Elementary in Iowa have a question for us today:

"What does kindness sound like?

People who are kind may say things like:

- How can I help?
- Do you want to join us?
- You go first ...
- I'm sorry I hurt your feelings.
- Are you okay?"<sup>1</sup>

What we say and how we say it matters. Have you ever heard somebody say "I'm sorry" who didn't really mean it? Of course you have. We have to mean what we say so other people know they can believe us and trust us.

You did a good job being kind last week. Let's do it again this week. Try to be kind 1-2 more times. This time, try being kind to different people.

*Let's pray ...* Jesus, make me a kind person, caring, helpful and generous to everyone. Help me to be considerate and always think about how my conduct affects others. Help me care how others feel so I am giving and forgiving. As a kind person, I want do good deeds without thinking about a reward. Help be to be kind to others. In Jesus' name, amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Shimek Elementary, Iowa City, Iowa, December 2011

## Message: “How We Care”

**Lives are made better when we care for others the same way God cares for us.** This fits with our Why: “We believe Jesus Christ makes our lives together better in every way.” This is what we believe. We’ve affirmed it over the last two years. It’s the reason we come together to worship and praise God. It’s what motivates us to follow Jesus in good times and bad. Our why changes the status quo and has the power to give life.

**Knowing our why empowers us.** Once we discover our why, we’re able to align our beliefs with the choices and actions we take. We aren’t living by accident. We’re living life on purpose. That’s powerful. It means we can make good decisions, acting with intent. That’s the way to find fulfillment and contentment in everything you do.<sup>2</sup>

**Few people or organizations understand their why, their purpose.** You’ll find mission and vision statements all over the place. Does anyone remember the time when corporate values were displayed throughout offices? It was intended to motivate workers to help them be more productive. It didn’t work very well. In fact, it spawned some cartoons and jokes from Dilbert ([www.dilbert.com](http://www.dilbert.com)) to Demotivators ([www.demotivators.com](http://www.demotivators.com)).

**One thing I know to be true: caring makes lives better.**

Jesus life shows us how to care for someone. God goes first, caring about everything, especially you. The problem is we can get caught up in the selfishness and lies of the world. We may end up demotivated. Anxiety and frustration – the children of fear, can rule our hearts and minds. That can lead us to bad decisions or drifting through life.

**The way to get on track is figure out our why: Jesus makes our lives together better in every way.** We know that deep down, way past conscious thought and language. When we accept Christ, our soul is connected to God. Our whole being resonates when we’re in God’s presence. We seek God moments out. We create places and spaces where we can experience God in real ways. That’s necessary.

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<sup>2</sup> Material drawn from <https://simonsinek.com/commit/why-discovery-course-intro/>

**Our soul is needy, craving nourishment.** It needs to be filled. We can fill it in one of two ways. We can fill our soul with things of God – things that give life, or we can fill our soul with things that aren't from God – things that don't give life. We can turn toward God or we can turn away from God. We can care about the needs of others or we can ignore them. We can seek justice or be unjust. There's no in-between.

**I believe what the Bible says matters.** It reveals the nature of God and our experiences of God over millennia. It doesn't take long for doubters who read the Bible with an open mind to discover God's living Word touches them. It changes them. It shows spiritual things to them. It calls them to a realization: we aren't God. We discover we need God to live a life free from the demotivating patterns and actions of this world.

**Paul wrote these words:** *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or violence?"* (Romans 8:35). It's a rhetorical question.

We know the answer. It's written on our heart.

**The saving grace of Jesus redeems us.** We're free from the chains that bind us. We're given a new heart, one that isn't stone – impermeable and invulnerable. Instead, Jesus gives us a heart of flesh. It's a heart that knows what love is. We're ready and open for relationship. Yes, we can be hurt, but that's part of really living life. When we experience the sorrows of life, it makes the joys of life even more beautiful and inspiring.

**What does this mean to us?** When our hearts are filled with love, we care. That's what it means to be part of God's family. We aren't isolated and alone. We're in relationship. We're can care for other people. But it's not enough to care a little bit. We need to care well.

**The second part of Simon Sinek's golden circle is How.** How isn't what. In other words, how isn't the specific things that we do. When we understand how we live out our why, we understand the unique ways we think, speak and act towards God, other people and all of creation. We understand how the things we do are unique to us and the community we serve. We're God's ambassadors to those who are

needy, helping to fill their souls with spiritual food while caring for their physical, mental and emotional needs.

**The prophet Isaiah wrote these words:**

*"Learn to do right; seek justice.*

*Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the orphans;  
plead the case of the widow"* (Isaiah 1:17).

These words resonate with our neighbors. They hear them in different ways, including film, video and social media. They speak to human nature, our desire for safety and security.

**People outside the walls of our buildings react when we do good.**

When we seek justice in peaceful ways, we connect with people in our community. They respond when we show we care for them in meaningful ways, not because we have to but because we want to.

**I believe caring is one of our greatest How's.** Meaningful relationships only exist when the parties involved care about each other. You know the opposite of love isn't hate. The opposite of love is apathy, when someone doesn't care. The reverse is true as well. When someone is interested in you, they show it in the way they care.

**When someone listens carefully to what you say, they care.**

When someone looks you in the eyes, making a connection, they care. When someone asks how your day went before telling you about theirs, they care. These are the nonverbal cues we pick up on that tell us, "There's something special going on here."

**If you want to make a connection with someone, take note.**

Just sending an email or text won't work. You need to take the extra step. That's true in all kinds of relationships. It's true with your significant other. It's true at home with family. It's true at work with your co-workers and boss. It's best to show you care in authentic ways.

**That's especially true when you're talking with someone who has been oppressed and made to feel unwelcome.** Talking with several friends this week, I realize one thing: we're all tired, frustrated and anxious. My black friends are tired. My Filipino family and friends are tired. My LGBTQIA+ friends are tired. Our healthcare and essential

workers are feeling unappreciated and tired. Our children are tired – they would rather be in school with their friends than home.

**One way you can brighten up your day is to connect with someone who cares.** Maybe it's a parent, your spouse, a brother or sister, an aunt or uncle or one of your children. Maybe it's your BFF or buddy. I hope it's you. When we connect to someone who cares for us in return, we're tapping into something special. God is giving us a little extra boost.

**We're empowered by love** (Romans 8:38-39). Paul wrote this:  
*"... nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created."*

**God is love.** And love is what makes the world go around. You won't need money on the stairway to heaven; all you need is love. When we love others, God is present. God's blessings flow. And that love connection makes relationships that start, grow and flourish and bear good fruit. That makes other people's lives and our lives better.

**To quote John, Paul, Ringo and George,**

*"All you need is love  
All you need is love  
All you need is love, love  
Love is all you need."*<sup>3</sup>

**Love is all you need to care.** Jesus shows us the way to a better life.

**All of you can make a difference in the world.**

You just have to choose what you'll do.

I invite you to reach out today and show someone you care.

*Let us pray silently together ...*

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<sup>3</sup>"All You Need Is Love", The Beatles, 1967

**Isaiah 1:16-19 (CEB)**

Wash! Be clean!

Remove your ugly deeds from my sight.

Put an end to such evil;  
learn to do good.

Seek justice:

help the oppressed;  
defend the orphan;  
plead for the widow.

Come now, and let's settle this,  
says the Lord.

Though your sins are like scarlet,  
they will be white as snow.

If they are red as crimson,  
they will become like wool.

If you agree and obey,  
you will eat the best food of the land.

**Romans 8:35-39 (CEB)**

Who will separate us from Christ's love? Will we be separated by trouble, or distress, or harassment, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

*We are being put to death all day long for your sake.*

*We are treated like sheep for slaughter.*

But in all these things we win a sweeping victory through the one who loved us. I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created.