

**September 7, 2008**  
**“A New Wardrobe: Kindness”**  
**Colossians 3:12 NLT**

“Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness...”

One company had a DRESS CODE UPDATE in their EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK which read: Effective immediately...  
It is advised that you come to work dressed according to your Salary.

If we see you wearing \$350 Prada sneakers & carrying a \$600 Gucci Bag, we assume you are doing well financially and therefore you do not need a raise.

If you dress poorly, you need to learn to manage your money better, so that you may buy nicer clothes and therefore you do not need a raise.

If you dress in-between, you are right where you need to be and therefore you do not need a raise.

Last week we talked about God’s fashion for us. There is a new wardrobe that God has picked out for us. We are to take off what we use to wear (Galatians 5:20-21 NCV) things like hatred, jealousy, anger, bitterness, selfishness, harsh words, slander, gossip, causing divisions among people, envy... and put on things like, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Last week we looked at compassion or tenderhearted mercy. Today we look at kindness. It is no coincidence that kindness follows compassion. To continue using fashion terms, they compliment each other, they go together. When you are putting a wardrobe together you purchase clothes or accessories that will go with or compliment each other. Unlike, when I hear my wife say, “You’re not going to wear that shirt with those pants are you?” Then I say, “well, not now...hey, what’s wrong with wearing this shirt with these pants? Looks ok to me.” To which she replies, “They don’t go together!”

Well, compassion and kindness “go together.”

Kindness may surprise some because not many are kind, but kindness is always appreciated. One time my son Jesse and I were in Texas. While we were there we went to a baseball game at the Texas Ranger’s stadium. When the game was over and we were walking (a mile) back to our (rented) car, we saw a young boy crying. We went up to him and found out that he was lost. He couldn’t find his family. We told him not to worry, they would be back, and we stayed with him. After a while when his parents didn’t come back we said, “sorry kid, gotta go and left him there...” just kidding. After a while his mom and sister showed up. His mom said the dad went in one direction and she and her daughter the other. Now that they had found her son they had no idea where

the father was. We suggested he may have gone back to the car. We walked them to where the car was, though they said it wasn't necessary and there was dad. They thank us for our kindness, and were a little surprised by it.

These days many talk about doing random acts of kindness. Perhaps this is because we live in society that is starved for good deeds.

**Why should we be kind?** This past week we read through the book of Ephesians. Take a look at these verses from that epistle: (Eph 1:6-8 NLT) "So we praise God for the wonderful kindness he has poured out on us because we belong to his dearly loved Son. He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven. He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding." (And Eph 4:32 NLT) ...be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Why should we be kind? Because *God is kind and He wants us to be like Him. God has been kind to us, and commands us to be kind to others.*

Have you ever seen the movie, "Pay It Forward."? It is about a schoolboy in Las Vegas named Trevor McKinney. He is given a project to complete by his social studies teacher. His task is to come up with a plan that will change the world through direct action. On his way home from school later that day, Trevor notices a homeless man, Jerry and decides to make a difference in Jerry's life. Trevor then comes up with the plan to "pay it forward" by doing a good deed for three people who must in turn each do good deeds for three other people. The idea was not to pay back the person who showed you kindness, instead the one who showed you kindness would ask you to show kindness to three other people. Then each of those three would have to show kindness to three others, and ... well you can see how quickly it multiplies. Kindness is never lost.

Jesus has been kind to us, pay it forward, be kind to others. In Matthew 7:12 (NLT) Jesus said, "Do for others what you would like them to do for you." If only we could keep that in mind when we are dealing with other people. *We should be kind because we want others to be kind to us.*

*When you are kind not only do others benefit, you benefit also.* It's more blessed to give than to receive or as it says in Proverbs 11:17 (NLT), "Your own soul is nourished when you are kind..."

**Who makes us kind?** *God not only commands us to be kind, He makes us kind.* Gal 5:22 (NIV) says, "...the fruit of the Spirit is ... kindness..." When the Holy Spirit is planted in our lives kindness will be the fruit. When the Holy Spirit controls our life, He will produce love and kindness flows from a heart of love. 1 Corinthians 13:4 (NLT) "Love is patient and kind." *Kindness is based on a loving heart of the giver not the loving heart of the recipient.* Jesus said (Luke 6:35) "Love your enemies!" and as we stay in close relationship to and communication with, and under the control of the Spirit of God, He will produce kindness in us.

*Daily you ought to remember to thank and praise God for His kindness to you. Paul wrote to Titus (Titus 3:4-6 NLT), "But then God our Savior showed us his kindness and love. He saved us, not because of the good things we did, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life through the Holy Spirit."*

**What does it mean to be kind?** Genuine kindness is our response to God's love. Kindness is a sign of a loving compassionate heart. A kind person is pleasant, good, gracious, and always appreciated. *Kindness is love in action.* Many have learned how to pretend to love others or appear to take an interest in them. We may have good intentions and even feel moved with compassion when we hear of others' needs. But *God calls us to real and sincere love that requires concentration and effort. It means helping others become better people. It demands our time, money, and personal involvement.* Look for people who need your love, and look for ways you can show kindness.

Mark was walking home from school one day when he noticed the boy ahead of him had tripped and dropped all of the books he was carrying, along with two sweaters, a baseball bat, a glove and a small tape recorder. Mark knelt down and helped the boy pick up the scattered articles. Since they were going the same way, he helped to carry part of the burden. As they walked Mark discovered the boy's name was Bill, that he loved video games, baseball and history, that he was having a lot of trouble with his other subjects and that he had just broken up with his girlfriend.

They arrived at Bill's home first and Mark was invited in for a Coke and to watch some television. The afternoon passed pleasantly with a few laughs and some shared small talk, then Mark went home. They continued to see each other around school, had lunch together once or twice, then both graduated from junior high school. They ended up in the same high school where they had brief contacts over the years. Finally the long awaited senior year came, and three weeks before graduation, Bill asked Mark if they could talk.

Bill reminded him of the day years ago when they had first met. "Do you ever wonder why I was carrying so many things home that day?" asked Bill. "You see, I cleaned out my locker because I didn't want to leave a mess for anyone else. I had stored away some of my mother's sleeping pills and I was going home to commit suicide. But after we spent some time together talking and laughing, I realized that if I had killed myself, I would have missed that time and so many others that might follow. So you see, Mark, when you picked up my books that day, you did a lot more. You saved my life."

A little act of kindness can produce large results. (Chicken Soup For the Soul Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, HCI, pp. 35-36.)

How many of you go out of your way to show kindness to others? As Christians, we should flood our world with kindness. Every day we should touch lives by taking the time to care about others. This week, & the weeks to follow, let us go out of our way by reaching out with the spirit of kindness to everyone, people we know and don't know, people we work with, even those we may not like.