Stories of Kindness

Share about a time when someone did something kind for you which was totally unexpected.

**Question #1:** How did the act of kindness impact you personally? How did it make you feel?

**Question #2:** What makes kindness so powerful?

**Question #3:** Who comes to your mind when you think of kindness? How did or does that person embody kindness?
Reaching Out With Kindness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Insight About Kindness or Compassion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romans 2:4</td>
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<td>Titus 3:4-5</td>
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<td>Zechariah 7:8-10</td>
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<td>Proverbs 3:3-4</td>
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<td>Hosea 10:12</td>
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<td>Isaiah 58:6-12</td>
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Improving Your Serve

As we consider people who are far from God, whose “spiritual ball” is still in the tee box, our actions will speak louder than words. In fact, our words about God, Christianity, and the basic Gospel message will most likely fall on deaf ears until we have won the right to speak. Compassionate and thoughtful acts are sure-fire ways to melt the icy resistance of someone you know who’s in the tee box area. The old adage, “kill ‘em with kindness” needs to be our mantra as we seek to “improve our serve.”

In the book, *Irresistible Evangelism*, a working definition of kindness is suggested as “demonstrating God’s love by offering to do humble acts of service, in Christ’s name, with no strings attached” (*Irresistible Evangelism* p. 91). The authors go on to say,
We’ll never shine brightly in the kingdom of God until we can sign up for activities that bring us no immediate, tangible, specific gain. We need to learn the lesson Jesus taught in Luke 6:35 about giving without expecting to get anything back, not even gratitude. The only reward we need is knowing that we’re acting like sons of the Most High. The watching world will never be genuinely interested in our message as long as we come across as self-seeking promoters of our little piece of the kingdom. However, the world hungers for generosity in Christ’s name when those expressing it don’t care who gets the credit. If we don’t take seriously the phrases in Christ’s name and with no strings attached, we’re just using a manipulative marketing strategy.

*Irresistible Evangelism* p.94

When we serve another, with no strings attached, we are operating in a way that is counter-cultural. Doing something for nothing is unheard of these days. A posture of a servant can easily be drowned out by the “me, my, and mine” slogans of Madison Avenue. But let’s remember…it is the kindness of God that has drawn us into a saving relationship. Through His kindness, God has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and pulled us out of the miry clay. Through His many acts of kindness in the New Testament, Jesus gives us a model of what it means to be kind.

Steve Sjogren, one of the co-authors of *Irresistible Evangelism*, shares a powerful personal story about acts of kindness. He was in the midst of recovering from a life threatening surgery-gone-bad. While he was in the hospital he shared:

*I was at the lowest point of my life in every way- physically, emotionally, and spiritually; I desperately needed to give something away to get better. All I could think of that was available to me was Popsicles. So whenever visitors asked if there was anything they could do for me, I didn’t even let them finish the sentence. “Have you got any pocket change?” I would ask. If they did, I’d have them roll me in my wheelchair down the hallway to the Popsicle machine. They would spring for a lap-full of the tasty treats, and then we would go up and down the hallways looking for patients to give them to. The only guideline: Only patients not on ventilators could get a Popsicle!*

*I can’t prove it, but I think I got better much faster by giving away all those Popsicles. It was my way of cooperating with God in my healing process. I had to get out of myself and get into principles that are much bigger than my circumstances- I got better and better as I gave away what I didn’t even have in the first place.*
Debrief

**Question #1:** What gets in the way of you performing acts of kindness?

**Question #2:** In what way are you personally challenged by what you just read?

## Putting Feet to Your Service

Work through the worksheet entitled Kindness Ideas. Mark ideas that would be possible acts of kindness that you could try out in the next week or before the next session.
Kindness Ideas

**Public Places**
- Toilet Cleaning
- Cart Token for Shopping Carts
- Employee Soft Drink Giveaway
- Cookies
- Cappuccino
- Polaroids at Carriage Rides
- Shoe-Shines
- Hand Cleaning Towelettes
- Stamps in Front of Post Office
- Seeds on Cars

**Roadsides & Traffic Lights**
- Parking Meter Feeding
- Summer Car Washes
- Coke Giveaways
- Winter Car Washes/ Desalting
- Popsicle Giveaways
- Trash Pickup with “Kindness in Progress” Signs
- Towelettes Giveaway on Side of the Road

**Parks**
- Doggie Treats
- Pet Festivals
- Hot Dog Grilling
- Helium Balloons for Kids
- Polaroid Family Photos
- Picnic
- Ice Cream Coupons
- Gatorade at Biking Trails
- Pictionary in the Park
- Flower Seed Packets
- Face Painting
- Doggie Dirt Clean-Up
- Doggie Wash
- Golf Balls
- Golf Tees
- Golf Ball Cleaning
- Pump-up Spray Water Bottles
- Clowning
- Bottled Water Giveaway

**College Campuses**
- Bike Fix-up
- Pen and Pencil Giveaways
- Post Cards and Stamps
- Photocopying
- Floppy Discs
- Tutoring
- Soft Drinks, Gatorade, and Lemonade at Class Sign-up
- Dorm Room Cleaning
- Drinks at Intramural Athletics
- Drinks at Greek Events
- Breakfast Pop Tarts
- Test Essay Booklets
- Exam Answer Sheets
- Coffee and Tea during Late Night Study Sessions
- Pizza on Move-In Day at Dorms
- Quarter Drop
- Long Distance Phone Cards
- Ice Cream Coupons
- Care Packages for Students
- Gum, Blow Pops
- Snacks (chips, crackers)

**Automobiles**
- Car Wash
- Windshield Washing
- Check Oil and Fill
- Single Mom’s Oil Change
- Washer Fluid Fill
- Tire Pressure Check
- Interior Vacuuming
- Interior Window Cleaning
- Bulb Replacement
- Windshield Ice Scraping at Apartment Complexes
- Windshield Ice Scrapers
- Freeing Cars Stuck in the Snow
- Car Drying at Car Washes
- Windshield Washing at Self-Serve Gas Stations
- Buy Down Gas to Bargain Price
- Hand Cleaning Towelettes at Gas Pumps

**Malls & Shopping Centers**
- Christmas Gift Wrapping
- Dollar Drop
- Meal Purchasing at Food Court
- Quarters in Coin Returns
- Long Distance Phone Cards
- Ice Cream Cone Coupons
- Package Check-In
- Childcare during Christmas Shopping
- Coffee/Hot Chocolate Coupons

**Sporting Events**
- Coffee Giveaways
- Soft Drink Giveaways
- Popcorn
- Popsicles
- Windshield Washing
- Peanuts
- Sunglasses (cheap ones!)
- Hand Cleaning Towelettes
- Freshen-up packs - (mints & moist towelettes)
- Trash Pick Up
- Bottled Water Giveaway
- Glow in the Dark Necklaces

**Downtown**
- Windshield Washing
- Soft Drinks for Shoppers
- Parking Meter Feeding
- Umbrella Escorts
- Business Window Washing

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**Holidays**
Chocolate Hearts on Valentine’s
Roses on Valentine’s
Green Foiled Coins at St. Patrick’s Day Parades
Easter Baskets for Businesses
Butterfly Cocoons for Easter
Easter Candy Giveaway
Flower Seeds for Spring
Mother’s / Father’s Day
Carnation Giveaways
Independence Day Festival Glow in the Dark Necklaces
July 4th Picnics House to House
Independence Day Festival Giveaways: Blow Pops, Gum
Labor Day - School Supplies
Halloween - Reverse Trick or Treat (House to House to give them candy)
Thanksgiving - Door to Door
Turkey
Door to Door Mums
Fall Candy Giveaway
Fall Leaf Raking
Christmas: Gift Wrap at Mall
Christmas: Giveaway Special
Carolining and Candy Canes
Door to Door Poinsettias
Scotch Tape Giveaway
Christmas Tree Giveaway
Snow Shoveling
Winter Survival Kit

**High School & College Sports**
Oranges for Football Practice
High School Sports Party
Watermelon after practice
Gatorade after a hard practice
Facilitate a community service project
Make hospital visits
Greet students and parents and help the freshmen move in
Baby-sit for the coaches
Physical therapy rehab
Care packages for finals week
Offer tutoring
Honor a team at your athletic meeting
Shovel manure
Go to lesser followed sports
Set up social settings
Make own Appreciation Day

**Capture seasonal times with high touch ideas**
Take a camera to practice/games
Clean up after a sporting event
Meet with freshmen for a coke
Organize surprise mini-birthday parties
Give away peanuts/popcorn at sporting events
Offer to do videoing of a practice
Offer to keep stats
Free car washes for the athletic department

**House to House**
Fruit Giveaway
Sunday Morning Paper and Coffee Giveaways
Leaf Raking
Lawn Mowing
Grass Edging
Screen Cleaning
Rain Gutter Cleaning
Garbage Can Return from Curb
Food Delivery to Shut-Ins
Kitchen Cleanup
General Yard Cleanup
Door to Door Carnation
Tulip Bulbs
Potted Plant Giveaways
Flower Seed Packet Giveaways
Sidewalk Sweeping
Windshield Washing
Snow Removal from Walks and Drives
Window Washing
Minor House Repairs
General Interior Cleaning
Community Dinner
Doggie Yard Cleanup
Weed Spraying
Tree Limb Trimming
Light Bulb Replacement
Seal Blacktop Driveways
Fireplace Ash Removal
Radon Detectors
Carbon Monoxide Detectors
Smoke Detector Batteries
Fragrance Spraying
Dog Washing
Filter Change for AC / Heater
Garage Cleaning
Fireplace Kindling
Bark and Mulch for Yards
Salt for Snowy Driveways
House Number Painting on Curbs
Shopping Assistance for Shut-ins
Poinsettias at Christmas
Picnics at Independence Day
Easter Baskets

**Miscellaneous**
Steaks & Salmon for Firefighters
Gasoline for Your Neighbor
Cleaning Up at Food Courts
Toilet Seat Covers
Birthday Party Organizing
Pay Library Fines
Winter Survival Kit
Suntan Lotion
Surf Wax
Summer Survival Kit
“Biggie Size” Food Orders in Fast Food Drive Thru Lanes
Blood Pressure Screening
Mother’s Day Carnation
Car Drying at Self-Serve Car Washes
Grocery Store Bag Packing
Free Bird Feeders and Refills to Convalescent Home Residents
Christmas Tree Collection
Christmas Tree Giveaway
Bait at Local Fishing Spots
Coffee at Bus or Subway Stops
Pay Laundromat Washer & Dryer
Memorial Service for Unchurched
Carnations to Cemetery Visitors
Easter Baskets
Pizza on Moving Day at Apartments
Move In Welcoming Party
Lawn Mower Tune-up
Time Change Reminder Flyer
Cocoons on Good Friday
Church Match Books
Scotch Tape at Christmas

**Improving Your Serve**