

The Power of Kindness: Lessons from Everyday Encounters

In our daily lives, we often overlook the lessons that can be gleaned from seemingly insignificant moments. A simple object lying on the ground, unnoticed and discarded, can serve as a profound metaphor for the human condition.

This teaching reflects on how acts of kindness, attentiveness, and compassion can transform lives and bring meaning to our own.

The Encounter with the "Thing"

As I walked along my path, I came across an unremarkable object on the ground—a broken clip with a piece of elastic string attached.

At first glance, it seemed useless, broken, and devoid of value. Yet, as I paused to pick it up, I realized that this small act of attention held a deeper significance. It reminded me of a verse from the Bible:

"Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy." (**1 Peter 2:10**, RSV)

This verse highlights the transformative power of mercy and kindness. Just as I showed compassion to this discarded object by picking it up, we are called to extend kindness to others, especially those who feel broken, lost, or without value.

The Call to Kindness

The act of picking up the "**thing**" became a symbolic gesture. It represented alertness to my surroundings, a deliberate decision to take action, and the willingness to invest time and effort in something that seemed insignificant.

It was a reminder that kindness is not always about grand gestures; sometimes, it is the small, intentional acts that make the greatest impact.

In our interactions with others, we can embody this same spirit of mercy. By picking people up—those who feel useless or broken—we reflect the kindness we have received from God.

As **1 Peter 2:3** states, "For you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." This kindness is not meant to be hoarded; it is meant to be shared, leading others toward healing and even repentance (**Romans 2:4**).

Recognizing Our Own Brokenness

Before we can truly extend kindness and compassion to others, we must first recognize our own brokenness and the mercy we have received.

Ephesians 2:8-19 reminds us that we were once "**on the ground**," lost and without hope. But through Christ's sacrifice, we have been **lifted up**, given new life, and placed in a community of faith.

This realization should inspire humility and gratitude in us. It also calls us to action. Just as God picked us up when we were lost, we are called to do the same for others.

This requires **attentiveness**, **decisiveness**, **availability**, and **initiative**—key character qualities that enable us to respond to those in need.

The Value of the Lost

The Bible emphasizes the importance of seeking and saving the lost. In **Luke 19:10**, Jesus declares, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

Similarly, the parables in **Luke 15** illustrate God's relentless pursuit of those who are lost. Whether it is a shepherd leaving ninety-nine sheep to find the one that is missing or a woman searching for a lost coin, these accounts underscore the immense value God places on every individual.

As followers of Christ, we are called to mirror this effort. How much time and energy are we willing to invest in seeking out and supporting those who feel lost or forgotten?

Are we sensitive enough to recognize their needs? Are we compassionate enough to act?

Cultivating Sensitivity and Compassion

Two essential character qualities—**sensitivity** and **compassion**—are crucial for this mission.

Sensitivity involves sensing the emotions and needs of those around us. It requires us to look beyond ourselves and avoid the "tunnel vision" that comes from being overly preoccupied with our own concerns.

By exercising our senses and remaining attentive to others, we can become more aware of their struggles and more equipped to help.

Compassion, on the other hand, is about investing whatever is required to restore the damage of others.

This may involve sacrificing our time or rearranging our priorities. It is not always convenient or easy, but it is essential if we are to fulfill our calling to love and serve others.

Practical Applications: Living Out Kindness

To internalize these lessons and make them a part of our daily lives, we can follow a structured approach using what I call the "4-E's Method": **Enlighten**, **Engraft**, **Exercise**, and **Expect**.

1. Enlighten

Seek understanding through prayer and reflection. Ask God to open your eyes to your role in His plan and your place in His body. Recognize that every person has value in His kingdom.

2. Engraft

Internalize key principles by memorizing Scripture and character qualities. For example:

- **Endurance vs. Giving Up:** Jesus persevered through rejection, pain, and the cross, finishing the work given to Him (**John 19:30**).

- **Decisiveness vs. Double-mindedness:** Jesus made firm choices, setting His face toward Jerusalem, undeterred (**Luke 9:51**).

- **Sensitivity vs. Callousness:** Jesus wept with those who mourned and felt compassion deeply (**John 11:35**).

- **Compassion vs. Indifference:** Jesus was moved with compassion, He healed the sick and fed the hungry (**Matthew 14:14**).

3. Exercise

Put these principles into action:

- Be attentive to your surroundings and seek opportunities to help those in need.
- Make a conscious decision to love and accept yourself as God does.
- Identify three people who are struggling this week and take steps to "pick them up."
- Visualize those who are lost as valuable members of God's kingdom.

4. Expect

Trust in God's faithfulness. Expect Him to work through your efforts and answer prayers for those who are lost or hurting.

Conclusion: From Brokenness to Purpose

The journey with the **three objects**—the **tile** (placed), the **tag** (identified), and the **thing** (useful)—teaches us profound spiritual truths about our identity and purpose in Christ:

- 1. Placed:** We have been intentionally positioned by God within His body for a divine purpose.
- 2. Identified:** We are children of God, imbued with worth and value.
- 3. Useful:** Even when we feel broken or insignificant, God can redeem us and make us instruments for His work.

As we walk through life, let us remember that every person we encounter has been designed by the Master Architect with a unique purpose.

By extending **kindness**, showing **mercy**, and offering **compassion**, we participate in God's redemptive work in the world.

Let us go forth with **sensitivity** and **compassion**, ready to pick up those who are broken or lost.

In doing so, we glorify God and fulfill our calling as His children—**placed**, **identified**, and made **useful** for His kingdom.

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