PRACTICING A ONE ANOTHER CULTURE
Small Group Discussion Guide

Sermon Title: Be Kind to One Another
Date preached: November 15, 2026

Opening prayer: Our God, we pray that we may enter together into fellowship with you – Father, Son and Spirit – and as we experience fellowship with you, we may also develop fellowship with one another so that we might reflect the love and care for One Another that brings you honor and us joy. Amen (~John 17:20-22)

Opening question: How were you able to encourage someone this week? Where did you receive encouragement?

Sermon Focus*:*
"And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you." EPHESIANS 4:32
The apostle Paul knows that as Christians there should be an innate impulse to be kind to one another. But Paul's experience in churches has shown that this is not always the case. So, Paul reminds us of the redemptive, forgiving work of Jesus and exhorts us, based on what we've already received to be kind, tender hearted and forgiving to one another. These three behaviors are linked together – when we allow our hearts to go out to the hearts of others, we are able to show the kindness and compassion of Jesus – to become conduits of His grace. The ability to be kind to others starts with being kind to ourselves. As with so many other admirable qualities, we can only do this by embracing what Jesus has already done for us.

Sermon Question:

- What part of the sermon has stayed with you since Sunday?
  OR What challenged, encouraged, or surprised you in the sermon?

Scripture reading: Ephesians 4:26

Optional expanded reading: Ephesians 2:1-10; 4:17-31

Scripture Context: The book of Ephesians is generally believed by scholars to have been written to the churches in Ephesus and the surrounding areas founded by Paul. The book was most likely written from prison in Rome between 62-64 A.D. Ephesians is a book of encouragement. Paul spends the first three chapters reminding believers of who they are in God's sight - God has chosen them, lifted them from the state of being dead in their sins to their current status of alive in Christ.

After praying the believers will remain steadfast in their faith, Paul gives them helpful advice on how to live as the redeemed of God. Paul urges the believers to live lives worthy of their calling. (He first cheekily reminds them of his current imprisoned status – Paul has faithfully followed God's call and he exhorts others to do likewise. Eph 4:1) While we may be tempted to read Paul's advice as directed at us as individuals, it is important to recognize that Ephesians was written to a community of believers. We can, and should strive individually for union with Jesus. But we cannot achieve union in our Christian community without one another. This week's focus verse challenges us to remember how Jesus has forgiven us in order to soften and tenderize our hearts toward one another – showing compassion and mercy. Only if we do so will we grow together to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13) to which we are called.

Word in focus: Chrestoi (Kind) – (Greek: χρηστοί chre-STEE) *Adjective*
The adjective chrestoi, translated as kind (or kindness) in Ephesians 4:31 is derived from the verb chraomai which means to use or make use of. In the adjective form found in Ephesians 4:31 it describes the quality of kindness believers are to show one another. In Romans 2:4 the adjective chrestoi is used to describe God's kindness which is to lead us to repentance. This is a useful sense of the word to help us understand what Paul is calling us to in Ephesians 4, it is the generous, patient, forbearance that God has shown us to which believers are now called to show one another.

Questions:

1. How would you explain what "Be kind" means? What does kindness look like in our words and actions?
2. Ephesians 29-31 list some actions and attitudes that are not kind. What are they? What are positive alternatives to each of the listed behaviors?
3. Some people use the acronym THINK to check themselves before they speak. Asking, "Is it True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind?" How could this help you to be more kind?
4. Compassionate, or tender-hearted, is the next trait mentioned in Ephesians 4:31. Practicing compassion as we face the needs around us can seem overwhelming. How can trusting God to guide you in the moment help you to respond with kindness?
5. Ephesians 4:32 ends with forgiveness. Why is forgiveness the logical next step when practicing kindness and compassion? Why are we able to forgive?

Sharing life together: Spend some time thinking about people who have shown you kindness, thank God for their example and pray for the ability to show kindness to others.

Closing prayer: Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)