

WORSHIP @ HOME



WHAT DOES YOUR SPRING WARDROBE LOOK LIKE?



Preparing for worship:

Christian meditation music <http://www.viewpure.com/g51ExyTuZbM?start=0&end=0>

Take a few moments to be still.

The Greeting:

ALL: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN'. Our tradition is to cross ourselves as this is said.

Opening prayer and lighting the candle:

O God, as light comes from this candle,
 May the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,
 Warming our hearts and brightening our way.
 May Christ our Saviour
 Bring life into the darkness of this world,
Amen.

Bible Reading:

A reading from Colossians chapter 3 verses 12-14

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

A message:

After considering putting on compassion, putting on kindness may seem less important; an undergarment covering a rather more elaborate outfit! Being warm and civil, getting along with others comes to mind. However, kindness is not a mundane virtue at all. The Bible portrays kindness very differently and in a much more compelling way. Most of us probably try to be nice and pleasant when we interact with others. After all, it works to our own benefit if others like us. Kindness, true biblical kindness, however, is much more than simply smiling and being polite.

True kindness is one of the God-produced supernatural spiritual fruits identified in Galatians 5:22. Like the other fruits of the Spirit, it can only be obtained through abiding in Christ. It is an outgrowth of the genuineness of our faith. It is a softening of the heart towards others, even when they do not deserve it.

We imitate God's kindness, therefore, by loving our enemies. Jesus said, "Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil" (Luke 6:35). Our kindness reflects the heart of our Father. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). We are called to be kind to others because God is kind to us. He loves us when we are unlovable, and He does this over and over again.



Remember, kindness is not weakness. In fact, kindness is extremely powerful. The old phrase “Killing them with kindness” speaks to the power a thoughtful gesture or an act of concern can have on a cold heart. Kindness can gentle the responses of others and make the world a better place. Kindness leads people to repentance.

Kindness is not just important for our actions in society in general, but also our more intimate relationships at home. In our homes, it can sometimes be even more challenging to always act in kindness. At school, work, church and other places we normally frequent, there are clear expectations of how we are expected to act. At home, we may feel freer to express our feelings and even more care is needed to make a home of love. There is nothing wrong with this. It permits us to explore our emotions and grow in character, but again reveals the close link between forgiving others and kindness. Remote learning and ways of working, dealing with changes to our routine, concerns for those we love, false news and plans to ease lockdown, impact us all in different ways. Meet any anger, worries or fear with patience and loving kindness. Look from the inside out. Consider the ‘why’ of a person’s reaction. Do not dismiss these deeper roots of actions. Empathise and respond with loving kindness.

In summary, we must lead with compassion and follow with kindness. In fact, compassion guides us to acts of kindness. Everyone has challenges, many hidden from sight. We must let kindness shape and define our responses. Even if someone is a bit grumpy and testing our patience, we must be led by a compassionate heart. They may have received bad news or feel worried or hurt. Small acts of kindness do matter and love does conquer all!

A time for reflection:

How will you dress up in kindness?

Reflect on these images and words:

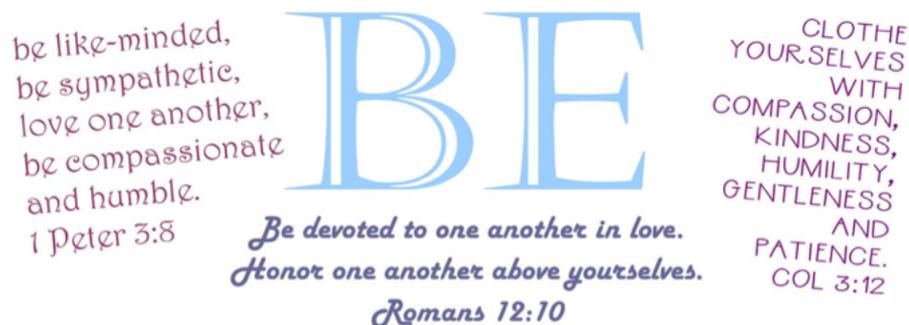
http://www.viewpure.com/_NI2sT0rTDc?start=0&end=0

There are countless opportunities to display kindness each day, and in so doing, to show others around us the love of Christ. How can you live out the sort of kindness God has shown you today?

Although this clip was obviously filmed before lockdown, there are many simple acts of kindness we can still engage in. These range from patience in our homes, a phone call or card sent to a person so that they do not feel forgotten. Simple acts of kindness could be seen as more important than ever. In a time when all we want is to be close to the people we care about, closeness is the one thing we cannot have. We need to make a special

effort to remain connected. It has been proved that simply thinking about a supportive person can activate a part of the brain associated with overcoming fear. Acts of kindness are therefore good for the immune system for the receiver and recipient.

Memorise these Bible verses together to uplift and inspire you. Use them in your plan for the day.



Kindness is a way of life and is not limited to random acts; although it definitely help us act spontaneously

when the opportunity arises. It is a decision and plan. Kindness as Jesus lived it is at the heart of peacemaking and has the power to move mountains. Kindness is a vehicle for His love, mercy and grace.



Closing prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,
 Bless our eyes
 to see goodness.
 Bless our words
 to speak kindness.
 Bless our hearts
 to feel compassion.
 Bless our souls
 to radiate love.

ALL: Amen.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name;
 thy kingdom come;
 thy will be done;
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of
the Holy Spirit be with us, now and evermore. Amen.**