



DATE	November 27, 2016
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	Others-Centered
SERIES	The Bible says Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. And believing that should change the way we live! But if we're not intentional about it, Christmas can come and go without changing us at all. Let's make this Christmas an intentional Christmas.

David began this series by reminding us Christmas is about God being intentional in sending Jesus to restore our broken relationship with Him. As Jesus followers, we too desire to be intentional. Isaiah gives us four descriptive titles that describe an intentional Jesus (Isaiah 9:6). Today we examine how the Wonderful Counselor calls us to be others-centered through kindness.

1. What is the kindest thing someone has done for you? How did that act of kindness change you (the course of the day, your circumstances, your relationship with others, etc.)?
2. Describe a situation in your own life when you acted kindly toward someone even if they did not deserve it. What was the result?
3. Describe a situation in your own life when you did not act kindly toward someone. What was the result?
4. In today's scripture (Matt 1:18-25), David pointed out the true kindness displayed by Joseph to Mary. Joseph made tremendous "deposits" of intentional kindness. David characterized intentional kindness as **a) confronting and conquering selfishness, b) making more relationship deposits than withdrawals, and c) starting with those closest to us**. Discuss as a group how Joseph modeled these in his actions.
5. Being others-centered often causes us to sacrifice something we want for ourselves. Look at these examples of people in the Bible who were asked to make sacrifices. What sacrifice did they make and how did it demonstrate intentional kindness? What were the results of some of these kind acts?
 - Exodus 1:15-2:10 Moses' mother
 - 2 Kings 4:8-36 The Shunammite Woman
 - 1 Samuel 25 David and Abigail
 - Luke 5:17-26 The Paralyzed Man and his Four Friends
 - Luke 10:25-37 The Good Samaritan
6. Colossians 3:12 reminds us of the things God's chosen people should be "clothed" with. What does that look like and why do you believe it's important for God's people?
7. David pointed out that in our close relationships, **the ones we are most likely to take advantage of are those who need kindness the most!** Intentional kindness calls us to make more deposits than withdrawals. To the level you are comfortable; discuss with your group some specific ideas in your own relationships for answering the three questions kindness asks...

- How can I help?
- Who can I thank?
- What can I forget (or forgive)?

Then come up with a plan of action to take in order to start depositing more than you withdraw. Write it down, commit it to the Lord, and prayerfully follow through.

As we head into this Christmas season, let's do more than celebrate...Let's be changed!
Remember: **Kindness is a decision in me to be about you.**