



KINDNESS - WHEN I DON'T DESERVE IT

True Story

It was football season, and the 8th grade locker room had been trashed at Cross Timbers Middle School! Who did it?—the boys on the football team!! Dirty clothes, trash and food wrappers were everywhere. The coaches determined it was a good time to teach the team a lesson they would never forget! So, the coaches had all 50 players sit in the gym. “Oh, great,” the boys thought, “I’ll bet they’ll make us run ‘til we’re sick!”

And then something unexpected happened. While watching from the bleachers, the stunned players saw their coaches begin to run the length of the court. The coaches had instructed the boys that for each lap they completed, one player must stand—one boy at a time—until the coaches had run a lap for *each* of the 50 team members! Over and over the coaches ran up and down the gym floor. Up and back they ran, exhausted, until 50 laps were completed and *all* the players were standing!

Gasping for air, about to collapse, and looking at their bewildered team, the coaches stopped. Head Coach Lentz, barely able to breathe, spoke for them all, “You trashed the locker room, but we took the punishment you all deserved, and that, boys, is what we call, ‘grace!’”

Talk About It | Read each question aloud and share your thoughts.

1. Do you think the boys on the team are more likely or less likely to trash the locker room again? **Why** or **why not**?
2. The coaches gave grace to the team. Did they make a wise decision when they took the players’ punishment by running the laps? **Why** or **why not**?

Define It | Grace

“Grace” is the ultimate act of **kindness**. Grace is shown when someone is compassionate and does something good and kind for you when you don’t deserve it. When you are discouraged about wrong choices you’ve made, receiving grace brings you hope. For example, in His love and compassion, Jesus took the punishment for our sins when He died on the cross so we could have forgiveness and eternal life with Him.

3. Together **read** aloud the Scriptures listed below. Next, **divide** into four discussion groups for the rest of today’s lesson. **Read** your group’s assigned verses again and **talk about** a time when a friend, teacher or family member showed you **kindness** you didn’t deserve.
 - Group 1: Ephesians 2:4-9
 - Group 2: Psalm 103:8-13
 - Group 3: Isaiah 30:18 & Ephesians 4:32
 - Group 4: Titus 3:4-7



4. Because God is **kind** toward you *when you don't deserve it*, **how** could you show *undeserved kindness* to:
- A coach who doesn't give you the playing time you think you deserve?
 - A teacher who embarrasses you in class?
 - A sibling who takes your favorite shirt without asking and ruins it?
 - A teammate you've caught stealing from your locker?
 - A "friend" who makes fun of you in front of everyone at the lunch table?

Live It

Think of a person who has shown you **kindness** and forgiveness *when you didn't deserve it*.
_____. Make time to thank him or her today!

Read It | Search God's Truth for answers to the discussion questions.

Ephesians 2:4-9 ⁴ But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His **KINDNESS** to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Psalm 103:8-13 ⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. ⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will He harbor His anger forever; ¹⁰ He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. ¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

Isaiah 30:18 Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; He rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for Him!

Ephesians 4:32 (Kindness Memory Verse) Be **KIND** and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Titus 3:4-7 NIV ⁴ But the **KINDNESS** and love of God our Savior appeared. ⁵ He saved us. It wasn't because of the good things we had done. It was because of His mercy. He saved us by washing away our sins. We were born again. The Holy Spirit gave us new life. ⁶ God poured out the Spirit on us freely because of what Jesus Christ our Savior has done. ⁷ His grace made us right with God. So now we have received the hope of eternal life as God's children.