

ALLEY Rundown – February 17- 18, 2024

Today's Bible Story: One More Time (Go the Extra Mile) • *Matthew 5:41*

Today's Key Question: When have you been surprised by kindness?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kinder than you have to be.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if there were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.*

Colossians 3:12 (NIV)

PRE-SERVICE: Dude Perfect

SLIDE: Theme

Hello everyone, and welcome back to the Alley! Here we try to have a good time —and hopefully learn a thing or two along the way. We're continuing our adventure in kindness, and our theme is gearing up for the outdoors.

Depending on where you live, some of you might've happened upon a certain kind of wild animal. The burglar of the backyard barbecue. I'm talking about, of course . . .

SLIDE: Photo of a raccoon

. . . The Trash Panda. Have you ever heard a raccoon called a trash panda? Why do you think that is?? Well, they are black and white and they love to dig through the trash! And let's see how much you all know about the raccoon.

Who's up for some 'Trash Panda Trivia'? Fourth vs. Fifth? Let's go!

SLIDE: "Trash Panda Trivia"

Choose three fourth and three fifth graders to come up to the front and stand the groups opposite one another.

Playing 'Trash Panda Trivia' is simple. I'll ask a survival trivia question. If one of you up here knows the answer, you must raise your hand. If you are correct, you get ten points for your team. If you're wrong, the opposing team automatically is awarded the points.

Any questions? Let's play!

SLIDES: "Trash Panda Trivia" Questions 1-7

Use the following questions or feel free to add your own.

Trash Panda Trivia Questions

- Do humans need approximately eight cups of water each day? YES
- Is Mt. Rushmore the tallest mountain in the world? NO, it's Mount Everest.
- Generally speaking, are insects and bugs a good survival food? YES
- Do poisonous snakes exist? NO! There are venomous snakes in this world but no poisonous snakes.
- Is touching a wild raccoon dangerous? YES
- Are fuel (wood) and heat (spark) the only elements needed to start a fire? NO, oxygen is also needed.
- Is the entire dandelion plant edible—flower, stem, and roots? YES

When finished, declare a winner. Lead the Large Group in a round of applause.

What an incredible display of survival knowledge!

Well, today we are talking about helping others out when they need it. That comes easier to some people than it does to others.

Like, some are willing to dive in, get your hands dirty, just to help someone else out. And some might be a bit hesitant. For example, most of us would be willing to hang out with a new kid at school if your teacher asked. You might even go a bit further and invite them into your friend group.

But, some of you would pass at that, thinking other people would be better at it than you.

A few of you might help your brother or sister with math homework if your mom or dad asks you. You might even go a bit further, pulling out your old textbooks, writing out problems, and quizzing them.

Others might claim that you're too busy to help. Don't have time. Don't want to. They'll figure it out anyway, right? You had to when you were their age.

We've talked about times when it's hard to be kind to others—and how to find God's help with that. This week, though, we're digging into going above and beyond just the bare minimum.

Most of us will show the kind of kindness that is asked of us. Not everyone will go above and beyond. Why don't we? Why don't we look for ways to truly bless others with kindness—even when we don't want to or it's difficult for us to do so?

Yeah, we ask the tough questions here in the Alley don't we? Good thing we've got an incredible library of books with a whole lot of answers that can help us today. It's filled with stories of people who knew God, and we can learn about our relationships with God from theirs. Let's take a closer look.

Today, we head to the book of Matthew. It's the very first book of the New Testament in your Bibles. In it, you can read all about the life and death of Jesus Christ. The author, named Matthew, was a despised tax collector working for the Roman government. However, Matthew's life dramatically changed when Jesus invited him to become one of His disciples. Let's check out our video...

VIDEO: Bible Story (15:59)

Jesus had a remarkable way of communicating God's truth to others. He used everyday situations to paint a really clear picture what His point was.

While on that mountainside, Jesus could've told the people simply to be nice. God wants you to be nice to other people. Makes sense, right?

However, Jesus chose to use a Roman law to really hammer it home. Everyone listening knew Roman soldiers could force someone to go one mile, but Jesus gave the audience another option—to give a second mile. Jesus knew this was a powerful word picture, and He wanted them to remember His point.

And it is a point we are still talking about today because it is still applicable to us! All around us, we have opportunities to go the extra mile. Thankfully, no Roman soldier will require you to carry their equipment. . . but you *will* encounter others who will ask a lot of you. All of you will face situations that will feel unfair, and that is where you can stand strong by choosing kindness.

If it is your day to clean the kitchen and your family decided not to rinse any plates or dishes off, you could smile as you clean them instead of just chucking them in the dishwasher. If you are asked to feed your dog, you could also take a minute to clean up the huge mess around his bowl.

When we do more than is required, even when it's not fair, you show God's amazing love to those around you.

If you're not sure how to show this kind of kindness, look no further than Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, He gave His life for each one of us even when we didn't deserve it! The kindness Jesus demonstrated and lived was extraordinary! And we get to search for ways to spread His love and kindness to others.

We are about to head to Small Groups, but I want each of you to ponder this one question.

SLIDE: Key Question

When have you been surprised by kindness?

Let's all pray together and ask God for help going the extra mile with the people in our life!

SLIDE: Theme Background

Large Group Leader leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

OFFERING

Last week we told you about the new ministry we are raising money for with our offering. Does anyone remember what it is? Yep...Morning Star Mission. It's a mission right here in Joliet, IL that helps people who are struggling financially. If you brought your offering, go ahead and put it in the container. Let's take a look at this video of a family of 6 who lost their home and needed help.

VIDEO: Family of 6 live in car

SLIDE: Theme

What a great mission to support. Morning Star changes lives! See what you can do this week to raise some money for this awesome mission.

SLIDE: SuperStart!

Wait! There's one more thing I have to tell you about, it's called Super Start! It's coming up in March and you won't want to miss this yearly event. It's an overnight event just for you - where you'll get to play games, eat, make new friends, and hear an awesome message about how much Jesus loves you. Check out this video...

VIDEO: SuperStart!

You'll receive a card with all the details on your way out today. Sign up today!