

GRACEFUL CONVERSATIONS FOR YOUTH

EPHESIANS 4:32 [NIV]: "BE KIND AND COMPASSIONATE TO ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVING EACH OTHER, JUST AS IN CHRIST GOD FORGAVE YOU."

Grace Upon Grace

words and music by Rachael Lawrence

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Grace u - pon grace, God show - ers us with love. Be - cause of God's grace, we have love to share, ev' - ry day, ev' - ry way, ev' - ry where!"

Chords: G, D7, Em, D7, G, D7, Emin, Am, G, D7, D7, G, D, G, D7, Em, G, D7, Em, G, D7, G.

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Does kindness come naturally to you? If so, has it always or have you needed to work at it? Is it easier with some people than it is with others? Some psychologists say we are born with a natural ability to be kind. We might say that God created us to be kind. As we grow and mature, however, we have an inborn tendency to mirror how others around us act. When we are exposed to hardness, we can become hardened. When we are exposed to kindness, we reflect more kindness. Intentional kindness toward others has the power to change the world because it multiplies kindness. Jesus knew this too!

But what does it take to be kind? First, we can try to understand how others feel, or as Paul writes to the people at Ephesus, be "compassionate to one another." Compassion literally means to feel someone else's pain. If we can relate to their pain, wouldn't we naturally want to help them feel better again? Paul also urges forgiveness, another

idea that can be tough to do in a world that encourages us to hold grudges. But sometimes, the best way to end suffering is to choose kindness and forgive others' wrongs, just like God did for us through the life of Jesus.

Questions for reflection and action:

- When did you last see someone suffering and feel you understood exactly how they felt? What did you do because of that feeling? Would you do something different now?
- When was the last time someone did you wrong? Were you able to forgive them? What did that mean to you?
- What are three kind actions that you can take this week to help encourage others to spread kindness?

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