

# TRUTH & RIGHT

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 **WELLSBURG**  
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## **KINDNESS**

“But just because I don’t agree with someone on everything, doesn’t mean that I’m not going to be friends with them. When I say be kind to one another, I don’t mean only the people that think the same way that you do. I mean be kind to everyone,”

Ellen DeGeneres. Ellen seems to be taking just as much flak for this statement as she did for the footage of her smiling and laughing next to George W. Bush at a football game.

What’s truly sad about that is it shows just how truly divided we have become. The divisions are very real and well defined and everyone needs to stay on their side. You’re a conservative Republican, you know who you can pal around with. You’re a liberal democrat, you know who’s got your back. Atheist. Christian. Black. White. Rich. Poor. Popular. Unpopular. Extrovert. Introvert. Athlete.

Bookworm. Young. Old...and on and on it goes. We are a divided people, yet as Christians, we have a responsibility to show a better way. It certainly was shocking to a Samaritan woman when a Jewish man named Jesus opened up a conversation on the topic of thirst and water at a well. “There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, ‘Give Me a drink.’ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?’ (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans,)” Jn. 4:7-9. This behavior is intentionally shocking because it forces us to ask the question, “Why?” “Why would someone like you, speak to someone like me?” “Why would you treat me

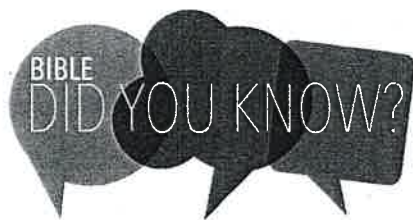
so kindly, when our very ideals and beliefs are in a bitter war pitted against each other?" This isn't normal. This isn't widely accepted. This isn't how we are supposed to act. Yet in a divided culture, as it was in Jesus' day with Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles, Pharisees, Sadducees, Men and Women all living in their segregated divided lives, when kindness is extended to someone outside of our segregated preferred community, it is bound to shock and cause dismay.

Unfortunately, for some, it causes confusion. Many assume when kindness is extended across divided party lines that it is a statement expressing approval or condoning of everything about the one you are being kind to. Jesus faced this when His kindness was passed from His holy hands on to sinful people. His opponents attempted to discredit His claims to be equal with a holy sinless God by pointing out the fact that He was kind to sinners. "For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children," Lk. 7:33-35. The

accusation that Jesus was a glutton and a drunk was supposedly proven by the fact that his kindness towards the same people condoned their very actions, proving He most likely did the same. When Jesus said that wisdom is vindicated by all her children He simply meant that in time, when people realized Jesus was in no way condoning the behavior of sinners He was kind to, they would be shocked to realize this is the very work of God. Even when God has turned His face against evil, His hands are still kind and generous to all. "For the eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil," 1 Pet. 3:12. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," Mt. 5:43-48. The evidence of the overall goodness of God is seen in His willingness to be kind and generous towards those who are on the opposite side of His righteousness. As Christians, we have a responsibility to represent this amazing goodness of God by in turn demonstrating a generous kindness to all and especially towards those who hold opposing views and ideals as us. This kindness which is blind to race, gender, social status, political view or morality is a key point of evidence in not only the goodness of God but also the presence of God dwelling in His people. We must be extremely careful not to segregate our kindness and extend it carefully towards certain groups while withholding it from others. "Let love be without hypocrisy," Rom. 12:9. "My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, 'You sit here in a good place,' and you say to the poor

man, 'You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,' have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?...If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors," James 2:1-4, 8-9. – Daniel Ruegg



***Sometimes the life of an evangelist can be so unpredictable given the work he is consumed with in teaching and preaching alone, that tough choices will have to be made concerning what all he can handle on his plate at any given time. "But concerning Apollos our brother, I encouraged him greatly to come to you with the brethren; and it was not at all his desire to come now, but he will come when he has opportunity."***  
**1 Cor. 16:12**

# People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



## *The Beka Weight*

During the sifting of archaeological soil in the Emek Tzurim National Park, under the auspices of the City of David Foundation, a tiny stone weight engraved with ancient Hebrew letters spelling the word Beka was unearthed. The weight, which dates back to the First Temple period, was found in archaeological soil originating from the foot of Robinson's Arch at the Western Wall, just north of the City of David. The soil was transferred from the excavation area to the sifting site in the Emek Tzurim National Park for careful sorting, during which the weight was uncovered. The Beka weight was used to evaluate the half-shekel donation brought by the Jewish people for both the maintenance of the Temple and as a census, as described in the book of Exodus 38:26: "One Beka per head; [that is,] half a shekel, according to the holy shekel, for each one who goes through the counting, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred three thousand, five hundred and fifty [people]." Archaeologist Eli Shukron, who directed the excavations on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, explained: "When the half-shekel tax was brought to the Temple during the First Temple period, there were no coins, so they used silver ingots. In order to calculate the weight of these silver pieces they would put them on one side of the scales and on the other side they placed the Beka weight. The Beka was equivalent to the half-shekel, which every person from the age of twenty years and up was required to bring to the Temple." "This three thousand-year-old Beka weight, inscribed with ancient Hebrew was likely used in the First Temple."

