



“Too Busy to BE” | Christmas Kindness: Tied With Love Not Strings

Luke 10:29-37

Anyone have a busy full schedule this Christmas?: Family? Work? Church? Personal? Travel?

→Am I too busy full to be kind?

With our Christmas calendars speeding up, it is imperative our schedules don't outpace our ability to follow Jesus in loving God and people well. There will be all sorts of opportunities this Christmas season to show kindness, with no strings attached, IF we aren't too busy to notice the people God sends our way. But, what do we get out of the deal?

So Jesus answers the question, “What does it take to make it to Heaven?” Jesus reminds the EXPERT that SAVED people are the type of people that love God with all that they are...and that they love their neighbors like they love themselves. But the expert wanted to further define “neighbor.” So Jesus tells a parable...

Luke 10:29-37: 29 *The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

30 *Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.*

31 *“By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.*

33 *“Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. 34 Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’*

36 *“Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.*

37 *The man replied, “**The one who showed him mercy.**”
Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”*

As a follower of Jesus...who am I to BE?

- The Priest & the Levite: Too focused about ritual purity concerns, fear of danger, or maybe they simply lacked compassion (kindness in action)...→Scripture DOESN'T say.
- Someone who loves God & people!→The unlikely person LOVED the robbed traveler.→Mindful, time & money!
- What are the characteristics of love?
 - Galatians 5:22-23: *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: *1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - 4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*
 - We love people because it is WHO we are...

What IS kindness? Why does it matter?

- DEF: “...the quality of being friendly, generous, & considerate.”
- DEF: “...being able to respond to the needs of others in the Spirit of Jesus.”
- **WHY does it matter?**→Boosts mood / well-being, reduces stress, enhances emotional resilience & mental health, strengthens relationships, promotes a positive outlook, improves cardiovascular health, increases life satisfaction, boosts immune system, creates a ripple effect, improves self-esteem, fosters empathy/compassion, strengthens communities, & promotes long life.
 - EASY→Smile.→Hold a door open.→Offer a compliment.→“Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give.”

- NOT SO EASY→Listen actively.→**Love Lift bag**.→Send a thoughtful message.→Be mindful of your words.→Remember special dates.
- CHALLENGING→Notice needs.→Share a meal.→Volunteer at an event.→Give a Christmas offering.→**Include others through invitation to church.**

If we are too busy full to be kind...we may be full of the wrong stuff!→OR...

- A full Christmas calendar doesn't automatically mean we're filled with the wrong kind of stuff.→SLOW DOWN!
- How do we SLOW DOWN to be kind?→Remember our source: Ask Jesus for help & to be filled with His Spirit.
 - Create margin: Practice meaningful traditions.
 - Engage hearts: Be mindful. "Father...who?"
 - Reflect on WHY: Think about the birth of Jesus?!→Jesus wasn't too busy to be BORN!

→As Christmas life speeds up, let's SLOW our hearts down...so we aren't too busy to BE!

TALK ABOUT IT - Questions to GROW through with family, friends, & myself.

1. Is my Christmas schedule busy or full with family, work, church, personal commitments, and/or travel?
2. How does Jesus' story challenge my understanding of being a saved person who loves God and loves others?
3. What is my definition of kindness? What are some easy, not so easy, and/or challenging ways to express kindness?
4. Am I too busy full of the wrong stuff to be kind to the people God brings my way? How can I slow down?
5. **PRAYER:** "Father, help me to be FULL of the Spirit this Christmas so I can show kindness to all who need it!"

QUOTES:

- “Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give.” - **Unknown**

SCRIPTURES: New Living Translation unless otherwise noted.

- **Galatians 5:22-23** - But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!
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MESA CHURCH: Mesa Church exists to love people into a closer relationship with Jesus!

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Hallmark

‘My Norwegian Holiday’

Summary: While grieving the recent passing of her grandmother, JJ (Fish) meets Henrik (Elsendoorn), a Norwegian who she makes an instant connection with when JJ discovers she has a troll figurine from his hometown.

The pair embark on a journey to Norway where they can uncover JJ and her grandmother’s ties to the troll figure. They wind up at Henrik’s family Christmas celebration as well as his sister’s wedding — together they heal and rediscover love.

Premieres: Friday, Dec. 1, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘A Not So Royal Christmas’

Stars: Brooke D’Orsay, Will Kemp.

Summary: Desperate for an interview with a reclusive count, journalist Charlotte (D’Orsay) convinces the royal family groundskeeper to masquerade as the Count, who went missing years ago.

Premieres: Saturday, Dec. 2, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Christmas with a Kiss’

Summary: Sparks fly when Mona (Morgan) heads home to help put on her family’s annual Christmas carnival.

Meanwhile, a photo journalist plans a surprise reunion.

Premieres: Sunday, Dec. 3, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘To All a Good Night’

Stars: Kimberley Sustad, Mark Ghanimé.

Summary: After saving a mysterious man’s (Ghanimé) life, Ceci (Sustad) realizes the same man is in town to buy her family’s parkland, which is used for their annual Christmas celebration.

Premieres: Thursday, Dec 7, at 7 p.m. MST.

‘Magic in Mistletoe’

Stars: Lyndie Greenwood, Paul Campbell.

Summary: Popular author Harrington’s (Campbell) commercial success has left him a curmudgeonly hermit. April (Greenwood), a publicist, joins Harrington to his annual hometown Christmas festival which celebrates his books. April provides damage control for Harrington’s sharp tongue, but soon discovers his kind heart and hopes he can learn to appreciate the spirit of Christmas.

Premieres: Friday, Dec. 8, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Christmas on Cherry Lane’

Stars: Catherine Bell, Jonathan Bennett, John Brotherton, Erin Cahill, James Denton, Vincent Rodriguez III.

Summary: A group of friends in different stages of life celebrate the holidays together: One couple (Brotherton, Cahill) are expecting their first child, an empty-nester (Bell) and her fiancé prepare for new beginnings and another couple (Bennet, Rodriguez III) are blessed with an opportunity to expand their family.

Premieres: Saturday, Dec. 9, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Round and Round’

Summary: While stuck in a bizarre time loop, Rachel (Michaelis) keeps reliving the night of her parent’s Hanukkah party. Her only hope of escaping may be the handsome guy (Greenburg) her parents are trying to set her up with.

Premieres: Sunday, Dec. 10, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Heaven Down Here’

Stars: Krystal Joy Brown, Tina Lifford, Juan Riedinger, Richard Harmon, Phylicia Rashad.

Summary: Taking inspiration from Mickey Guyton’s song, “Heaven Down Here,” the upcoming movie of the same name tells a story of four strangers stranded in a diner on Christmas Eve. Struggling to make ends meet, Imami (Brown) reluctantly picks up a shift on Christmas Eve. Local Pastor Felix (Riedinger) is trying to gathering enough food for parishioners, while caught in a faith crisis triggered by his broken relationship with his son. Clara (Lifford) is facing an identity crisis over her daughter’s upcoming move. She is grounded by her hospice patient (Rashad).

Premieres: Thursday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m. MST.

‘The Secret Gift of Christmas’

Summary: Widower Patrick (Russell) seeks assistance from personal shopper, Bonnie (Ory), who he hopes will help him reconnect with his daughter. Their shopping habits are wildly different, but Bonnie is committed to fulfilling Patrick and his daughter’s Christmas wishes.

Premieres: Friday, Dec. 15, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Sealed with a List’

Stars: Katie Findlay, Evan Roderick.

Summary: Before the coming end of the year, Carley (Findlay) dedicates herself to completing all the new year’s resolutions she gave up on. With support from her handsome co-worker, Wyatt (Roderick), Carley discovers love and inspiration to follow her abandoned dreams.

Premieres: Saturday, Dec. 16, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Friends & Family Christmas’

Stars: Humberly Gonzalez, Ali Liebert.

Summary: When Daniella (Gonzalez) and Amelia (Leibert) are set up by their parents, they agree to pretend date to please their families — but it soon grows into more than a charade.

Premieres: Sunday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m. MST.

‘Miracle in Bethlehem, PA’

Stars: Laura Vandervoort, Benjamin Ayres.

Summary: Just before Christmas, independent, single Mary Ann Brubeck (Vandervoort) adopts a baby girl to raise on her own. A winter storm keeps Mary Ann and the baby from making it home so they must spend the holidays in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

In a biblical twist, there is no room at the inn for Mary Ann. Her only option is to stay with the innkeeper’s brother, Joe (Ayres) — a bachelor who lives like a barn animal. As the unlikely pair spend more time together, romantic sparks fly.

Premieres: Thursday, Dec. 21, at 7 p.m. MST.

Great American Family

Destined 2: Christmas Once More

Date: Saturday, October 14 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Shae Robbins and Casey Elliott

Synopsis: “In this sequel, Theo (Elliott) continues to miss connecting with his girlfriend, Kim (Robbins) as he attempts to propose at Christmas.”

‘Twas the Text Before Christmas

Date: Saturday, October 21 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Merritt Patterson and Trevor Donovan

Synopsis: “An unexpected text message sent to the wrong number (Patterson) sets into motion a Christmas tradition with a new family (Donovan) over three separate years.”

Bringing Christmas Home

Date: Saturday, October 28 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Jill Wagner and Paul Greene

Synopsis: "A professor of military history (Wagner) teams with an antique store owner (Greene) to track down the original owner of a historic WWII uniform and the love letters left in its pockets."

Journey to Christmas (wt)

Date: Sunday, October 29 (8 p.m. ET).

Cast: Ash Tsai and Joey Heyworth

Synopsis: "While on a charity press tour, a model (Tsai) ends up stranded by the weather at the family home of the driver (Heyworth) she hired to assist her for the week."

A Dash of Christmas

Date: Saturday, November 4 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Laura Osnes and Christopher Russell

Synopsis: "A marketing exec (Osnes) must learn a recipe to get her dream job and ends up entered in a holiday bakeoff with a dream baker (Russell)."

Our Christmas Wedding

Date: Sunday, November 5 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Holly Deveaux and Drew Seeley

Synopsis: "In the sequel, roles reverse as Nicole's boss plans newly engaged Nicole (Deveaux) and Michael's (Seeley) wedding in two weeks at Christmas."

Christmas Keepsake (wt)

Date: Saturday, November 11 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Jillian Murray and Daniel Lissing

Synopsis: "A father (Lissing) bonds with his daughter and stumbles upon an unexpected romance (Murray) while tracking down the original owner of a Christmas time capsule."

A Christmas Blessing

Date: Sunday, November 12 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Lori Loughlin, James Tupper and Jesse Hutch.

Synopsis: "A TV chef (Loughlin) is divinely inspired to take over her late aunt's charity with help from a new friend (Hutch) and handsome business associate next door (Tupper)."

Santa, Maybe (wt)

Date: Saturday, November 18 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Aubrey Reynolds

Synopsis: "Can theater director Lila (Reynolds) rise to the challenge of putting on the perfect Christmas ballet, while also discovering her office Secret Santa in the process?"

A Paris Christmas Waltz

Date: Sunday, November 19 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Jen Lilley and Matthew Morrison

Synopsis: "A novice dancer (Lilley) pairs with a professional (Morrison) to enter a renowned dance competition... in Paris!"

Note: This is the next story in "The Christmas Waltz" universe.

My Christmas Hero

Date: Friday, November 24 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Candace Cameron Bure and Gabriel Hogan

Synopsis: "An army reserve doctor (Bure) tracks down her family's military history with the help of a new romance (Hogan)."

A Royal Date for Christmas (wt)

Date: Saturday, November 25 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Danica McKellar and Damon Runyan

Synopsis: "When a European Duke (Runyan) arrives in the US, he realizes that his bags have been lost in transit. He has no choice but to be styled, and ultimately inspired, by Bella (McKellar) the owner of a local boutique."

A Christmas for the Ages

Date: Sunday, November 26 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Natasha Bure, Anna Ferguson, Kate Craven and Cheryl Ladd.

Synopsis: "Prompted by their youngest granddaughter (Bure), four generations celebrate family and what Christmas was like in the 40s, 60s, 90s and present day."

Christmas on Windmill Way

Date: Saturday, December 2 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Christa Taylor Brown and Chad Michael Murray

Synopsis: "To save her family's legacy windmill, a woman (Taylor Brown) must remind her ex-boyfriend (Michael Murray) of the best of their hometown."

The Jinglebell Jubilee (wt)

Date: Sunday, December 3 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Erin Agostino and Marshall Williams

Synopsis: "A city manager (Williams) recruits the help of a childhood friend (Agostino) in setting right his town's Christmas Charity event, while she sets to work setting him up with her close friend."

Meet Me Under the Mistletoe

Date: Saturday, December 9 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Sarah Fisher and Simon Arblaster

Synopsis: "Two rival realtors are forced to work together to sell one special house before Christmas."

Peppermints & Postcards

Date: Sunday, December 10 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Ella Cannon and Christopher Russell

Synopsis: "When a Christmas letter concerning her love life goes viral, one mom discovers that romance might be right at her door."

Designing Christmas With You (wt)

Date: Saturday, December 16 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Susie Abromeit and Liam McIntyre

Synopsis: "With her career on the line, a decorator (Abromeit) must work with an unexpected partner (McIntyre) to showcase a house for an upcoming Christmas gala."

12 Games of Christmas

Date: Sunday, December 17 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Johnny Ramey and Felisha Cooper

Synopsis: "A group of old friends and neighbors are transported into a Christmas-themed board game during a Christmas party."

A Royal Christmas Holiday

Date: Saturday, December 23 (8 p.m. ET)

Cast: Brittany Underwood and Jonathan Stoddard

Synopsis: "In search of her big break, a reporter (Underwood) arranges a Christmas interview with a European Prince (Stoddard) visiting the states. Will the reporter's big story become her love story?"