

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

KINDNESS

Galatians 5:22-23 - **“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”.**

The Hebrew word for Kindness is: "Chesed" – which literally means, "to treat courteously and appropriately," it is also translated, "loving-kindness." The Greek word in the New Testament for Kindness is 'Chrestos' – which literally means "useful, pleasant, gracious". Kindness, like the other fruit of the Spirit, is an attribute of God. *“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.”* (Titus 3:4-5)

GOD’S KINDNESS TO UNBELIEVERS

“But let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the Lord”. (Jeremiah 9:24). *Even before we loved God, He loved us and sent Jesus as the atoning sacrifice for our sins.* (1 John 4:10). God hates sin but loves the sinner and desires that all come to Him through the blood of Jesus, and repent and turn to him as their Savior and Lord.

We also need the Holy Spirit’s gift of ‘*Kindness*’ that is imparted to us that we may learn to love the unlovely and do good to those who may despise us. Luke tells us that those who imitate God in being kind to the ungrateful and wicked *“will be sons of the Most- High”* (Luke 6:35).

OUR ACTS OF KINDNESS

Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary to China and founder of the China Inland Mission was asked to go to the home of a very poor woman and pray for her because she was ill. Many people during that time charged money for such services, but the family knew Hudson would not charge. When he began to pray, he felt uncomfortable because he had a coin in his pocket that he knew would help her in her poverty. He rationalized that he had only enough food in his own home for two more meals and he also needed the money. The conviction did not go away so he decided to give the poor woman his coin. As he knelt in prayer for her healing, he felt great freedom and encouragement. Hudson Taylor’s example teaches us that we should not repress an urge to be kind.

The fruit of the Spirit is more than an attitude or a trait that we desire; it is evidence that the Holy Spirit lives in us. Are you listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit as He prompts you to be kind to your family members, neighbors, co-workers and everyone with who you may come into contact with? Those that know us should be able to testify that we are ‘KIND’. Actions speak louder than words.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus points out three characteristics of kindness: it is compassionate, it takes action, and it is powerful.

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The Good Samaritan responded to a great need and was moved by the sight of the injured man laying by the roadside and met his need by taking him to the inn and paying for him to be looked after until he was well. **Read Luke 10:30-35**

As Christians, we are to be full of 'KIND' compassion, simply put, a kind person cares about people. Jesus never regarded those suffering with indifference, he responded to their needs with pity and always met their need.

OUR WORDS OF KINDNESS

Kind people seek opportunities to encourage others. When Paul (formerly Saul) became converted (Acts 9) many believers were afraid of him because he had persecuted the Christians and took many in chains to prison. Barnabas, however, saw what God had done in Paul's life and explained to the apostles that Paul now preached powerfully in the Name of Jesus. Because of Barnabas' support, Paul was accepted and trusted. Barnabas' name means "*son of encouragement*".

Proverbs 15:4 says, "The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit". Let us daily build someone up with our words, always be nice, kind and truthful. Colossians 4:6 exhorts us that our conversation should be full of grace, so we know how to answer everyone. It is so easy to be critical and to put people down, but Paul the Apostle encourages the believers in Hebrews 10:25 - "*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching*". Meeting regularly is not an option; it is a commandment for we need Christian fellowship and encouragement to maintain our position in the Body of Christ.

OUR EXPRESSION OF KINDNESS

Think of different ways that you show your Christian love to others in both a practical and caring way and bless those around you.