

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT DEVOTIONAL

# KINDNESS

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“But the **fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22–23, ESV)



**Love (Agape):** Unconditional, self-sacrificing love. It is the highest form of love and is often used to describe God's love for humanity.

**Joy (Chara):** Deep-seated gladness, delight, or rejoicing, often independent of circumstances.

**Peace (Eirene):** A state of tranquility, quietness, and freedom from disturbance. It can also refer to harmony in relationships.

**Forbearance (Makrothymia):** Patience, longsuffering, or endurance in the face of provocation or adversity.

**Kindness (Chrestotes):** Goodness, generosity, moral integrity, and benevolence in one's character.

**Goodness (Agathosune):** Moral excellence, uprightness, and kindness in actions and behavior.

**Faithfulness (Pistis):** Fidelity, loyalty, and reliability in keeping one's promises and commitments.

**Gentleness (Praytes):** Meekness, humility, and a mild or gentle disposition.

**Self-Control (Enkrateia):** The ability to exercise restraint over one's impulses, emotions, and desires.

## A Theological Overview

An attribute of God and a virtue highly esteemed but often lacking in humans.

The challenge in understanding kindness lies in its association with a cluster of terms that frequently overlap, and lack clear and consistent distinctions in meaning. This challenge transcends languages, evident not only in English (kindness, goodness, mercy, pity, love, grace, favor, compassion, gentleness, tenderness, etc.) but also in Greek (*chrēstos*, *eleēmōn*, *oiktirmōn*, *charis*, *agapē*, *splanchnon*, *epieikeia*, etc.) and Hebrew (*hesed*, *ṭōb*, *raḥāmim*, *ḥemlah*, *ḥēn*, etc.). Consider, for example, the interconnectedness of love, goodness, kindness, and mercy as highlighted in

“But **love** your enemies, and **do good**, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is **kind** to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” (Luke 6:35–36, ESV)

God's faithful love and favour towards His people is exemplified throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, the term translated as "kindness" or "lovingkindness" signifies God's enduring love—His unwavering commitment to fulfill His promises to His chosen people despite their sin and rebellion (Deuteronomy 7:12; Hosea 2:14–23).

In the New Testament, kindness, translated from the Greek word "*chrestotes*," encompasses qualities such as gentleness, goodness, uprightness, generosity, and graciousness. It is depicted as an attribute of God (Titus 3:4) and a characteristic of genuine love (1 Corinthians 13:4). Believers are urged to embody kindness and extend it to others. Examples of kindness can be observed in the actions of individuals such as Joseph (Matthew 1:19), the centurion (Luke 7:2–6), John (John 19:27), Julius (Acts 27:3, 43), and Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16–18). Recognizing that all people are created in God's image, kindness should be extended to everyone, irrespective of how distorted that image may have become (James 3:9).

## Scriptures

“See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.” (1 Thessalonians 5:15, ESV)

“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,” (Titus 3:4–6, ESV)

“For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.” (Romans 8:6, ESV)

“Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.” (Proverbs 3:3–4)

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:29–30, ESV)

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’” (Matthew 25:34–36, ESV)

“And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.” (Luke 6:34–35, ESV)



**“AND A SECOND IS LIKE IT: YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR  
NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”**

**(MATTHEW 22:39, ESV)**

# Day 1: Kindness Leads To Repentance

**READ:** “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,” **(Titus 3:3–6, ESV)**

“Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him **(2 Peter 3:15)**

“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?” **(Romans 2:4, ESV)**

**THINK:** Kindness is a powerful attribute that flows from the heart of God to His people. Scriptures says that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:28). Here, Paul reminds Titus and those following Jesus in Crete to remember how they acted before the kindness of God appeared to them in Jesus Christ. Salvation comes to humanity, not because we are deserving of it, but rather because of God’s mercy towards us. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift** of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8–9, ESV). God demonstrates His kindness by giving us life - and life to the full to enjoy, and He exercises patience despite our ingratitude or sinfulness. He delays judgment in order that His kindness will lead people to repentance.

**DO:** As Christians, let's make sure we're open to receiving God's kindness today. In a world full of chaos and uncertainties, God's kindness is something we can always rely on. Be thankful that He has revealed His Son to us and that through Christ, we can truly understand all the ways God has been kind to us. Take a few moments right now and recount some of the ways God has been kind to you and to those around you.

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"Kindness has converted more sinners than zeal, eloquence, or learning."

- Frederick William Faber

## Day 2: Be Kind As God Has Been Kind To You

**READ:** “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” **(Ephesians 4:32, ESV)**

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,” **(Colossians 3:12)**

**THINK:** In our journey of faith, God exemplifies the qualities He asks of us. He demonstrates love, forgiveness, generosity, faithfulness, and compassion, paving the way for us to follow suit. When we extend kindness to others, we mirror the kindness He has lavished upon us. In moments of temptation to withhold from others the fruit of the Spirit—love, patience, gentleness, and more—let’s recall that God’s generosity, faithfulness, and kindness knows no bounds, and therefore, neither should ours.

**DO:** Reflect on a recent interaction where you could have shown more kindness. What could you have done differently? Ask the Lord’s forgiveness, if necessary, and help for future interactions. Throughout the day, intentionally look for opportunities to be kind to those around you, whether through a smile, a word of encouragement, or a small act of service. Let us always seek to look to our Lord as our great example of how to treat those around us.

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“You have never really lived until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.”

**“HE HAS TOLD YOU, O MAN, WHAT IS GOOD; AND  
WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU BUT TO DO  
JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK  
HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD?”**

**(MICAHAH 6:8, ESV)**





## Day 3: Let Your Words Be Kind

**READ:** “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” **(Ephesians 4:29, ESV)**

“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.” **(Proverbs 12:25, NIV)**

**THINK:** In the scriptures above, we're reminded of the profound impact our words can have on others' emotional well-being. Anxiety is a heavy burden that many carry, but a simple act of kindness or a gentle word of encouragement has the power to lift someone's spirit and bring comfort. These verses underscore the importance of being aware of the struggles that others may be facing, and the significance of offering kindness and empathy. As followers of Christ, let us be intentional about speaking words of hope and love, for in doing so, we become instruments of God's comfort and encouragement in a world often weighed down by anxiety and despair.

**DO:** Today, let's reflect on our communication. Are our words seasoned with kindness, forgiveness, and compassion? As we interact with others, let us strive to be a source of encouragement and blessing. Consciously choose kind and uplifting words in your conversations today. If you catch yourself about to say something unkind, pause and consider how you can rephrase it in a more loving manner.

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“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.”

- Mother Teresa

## Day 4: Receiving Kindness from Others

**READ:** “After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta. The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold.” **(Acts 28:1–2, ESV)**

**THINK:** Kindness is not always easy to accept from others because we are afraid we might become indebted to them if we accept their help. While this may be the case some of the time, quite often people are operating on the principle of ‘doing unto others as you would have them do to you.’ Paul in Acts 28 along with some fellow Roman prisoners, just survived a shipwreck that crash-landed on the island of Malta. Confused, tired, cold, and hungry as the survivors must have been, the Maltese people offered unusual kindness to those who came ashore. Paul received their kindness and when people offer it to us, we should as well.

**DO:** Today, you don’t need to do too much here. Whenever someone in good faith desires to help you in whatever situation you may be facing, allow them. Do not let pride hinder someone else from experiencing the blessing of helping you. God may be using them as His instrument of kindness, and if that is the case, we should receive it joyfully.

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“The greatest thing a person can do for His Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.”

- Henry Drummond

## Day 5: Showing Kindness to Those in Need

**READ:** "Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed." (**Proverbs 19:17, ESV**)

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."  
(**Gal. 6:2, NIV**)

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." (**Gal. 6:10, ESV**)

**THINK:** Kindness often manifests itself in practical ways. Scripture is full of commands and examples of how we should use what we have been given to be a blessing to someone else. When we are kind and generous towards others, it meets far more than someone's immediate physical needs. It can encourage them emotionally and help them realize that they are not dealing with their problems all on their own.

**DO:** Today, let's focus on ways we can be kind towards each other. Whether big or small, intentional acts of kindness can make a significant impact on someone's day. Use the list below to inspire acts of kindness to those around you.

- Smile: A genuine smile can brighten someone's day.
- Listen: Give your full attention when someone is speaking to you.
- Say "Thank You": Express gratitude for even the smallest gestures.
- Hold the Door: Extend this simple courtesy to those behind you.
- Offer Help: If you see someone struggling, offer a helping hand.
- Show Empathy: Seek to understand and empathize with others' feelings.
- Show Appreciation: Acknowledge the efforts of others and express your appreciation.
- Forgive: Practice forgiveness and let go of grudges.
- Be Patient: Especially in challenging situations, exercise patience with others.
- Be Polite: Use kind words and manners in your interactions.
- Include Others: Invite someone who may be feeling left out to join your group.
- Send Encouraging Notes: A kind note or message can uplift someone's spirits.
- Share Knowledge: Help others learn and grow by sharing your knowledge and expertise.
- Practice Random Acts of Kindness: Surprise someone with a random act of kindness, like paying for their coffee.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

- John Wesley

