

# Kindness

## Fruit of the Spirit - part 5

May 3, 2015

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

### **DAY 1: Human kindness?**

1. When you think of kindness what comes to your mind?
  
2. Human beings show human kindness when:
  - a. Someone is kind to them.
  - b. They feel kind.
3. What strikes you about this kind of human "kindness?"
  
4. Who are a few people you would consider "kind"?
  
5. What is it about them that you'd consider them kind? What does kindness look like? Think in terms of both their actions and their attitudes...

### **Biblical kindness**

6. The root word for "kindness" is "chrestos."  
"Chrestos" means good, pleasant (of things), gracious, and kind (of persons).
  
7. In Galatians 5:22, the word for kindness is built on this root word, but with a different ending - "chrestotes." This word is used specifically of goodness of heart, and kindness.
  
8. Put these two meanings of "chrestos" and "chrestotes" together. How would you describe what the biblical writers are describing of this kind of kindness?
  
9. How is the New Testament definition most different from human kindness?

## DAY 2: God's Loving Kindness

1. Kindness is not *first* a human quality. It starts with God. His kindness is not *human* kindness. It is far more.

*Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."*

2. The phrase, "loving-kindness" is one Hebrew word: "hesed."

3. Below, are a list of verses that describe God's "loving kindness," His hesed love. Jot down your insights about God's "loving kindness" below each verse.

*Jeremiah 9:24 But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the Lord who demonstrates loving kindness and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

*Jeremiah 32:18 You show unfailing love to thousands, but you also bring the consequences of one generation's sin upon the next. You are the great and powerful God, the Lord of Heaven's Armies.*

*Lamentations 3:32 Though he brings grief, he also shows compassion because of the greatness of his unfailing love.*

*Daniel 9:4 I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: "O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your covenant and keep your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and obey your commands.*

*Hosea 11:4 I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them.*

4. What did you learn most about God's "loving-kindness?"

### DAY 3: An example of kindness

1. When David became king, there was always a possible threat of a descendant of the previous king to try to overthrow the present king. The "typical" approach was to simply murder any possible successors. That's not how David thought.

*2 Samuel 9:1 David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"*

*<sup>3</sup> ... Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet."*

*<sup>5</sup> So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.*

*<sup>6</sup> When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor. David said, "Mephibosheth!" "Your servant," he replied.*

*<sup>7</sup> "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."*

*<sup>8</sup> Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"*

*<sup>9</sup> Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.*

*<sup>10</sup> You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in the crops, so that your master's grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)*

*<sup>11</sup> Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do whatever my lord the king commands his servant to do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.*

2. What motivated David to show kindness to Mephibosheth?

3. List everything David did to SHOW kindness.

4. What was Mephibosheth's response to David's offer of kindness? (v.8).

5. In addition to all David gave Mephibosheth, he also had him eat at the king's banquet table every day. How does the writer describe David's attitude toward Mephibosheth? (v.11).

6. Kindness is seen in actions and attitude. What strikes you most about David's example?

#### **DAY 4: Kindness in the face of meanness.**

1. Anyone can be "kind" to someone who is kind to them. That kind of kindness is no virtue.

*Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

2. What does Jesus say is true of God's kindness? To whom is it directed?

3. Why would God be kind to people who are ungrateful and wicked?

4. This example of God's kindness is meant to illustrate Jesus' command to us at the beginning of Luke 6:35. What is that command?

5. Why do you think we are commanded to love our enemies?

*Romans 12:19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.*

<sup>20</sup> *On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

<sup>21</sup> *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

6. This is a parallel passage to Luke 6:35.

a. Instead of taking matters into our own hands, what are we told to do in v.19?

b. What is God's role in dealing with our enemies? (v.19)

c. What is our role in dealing with our enemies? (v.20)

d. What is the effect on our enemies of our undeserved kindness?

## DAY 5: Kindness is Costly

1. If you have even tried to show kindness to someone who doesn't like you, you know there is a painful cost. It's one thing to do something bad and get criticized. It's another thing to do something good and get nailed for it! Welcome to God's world. This is what it's like for Him to relate to people!

*Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that **God's kindness** leads you toward repentance?*

2. Paul wrote the letter of Romans to the church in Rome. It was mainly addressed to Christians. Yet, what did Paul observe in *even Christians'* response to "the riches of God's kindness?!?!"

3. Have you shown contempt for the riches of God's kindness, tolerance and patience to you? How?

4. God's kindness is not just a grandfatherly "Boys will be boys," attitude. In Romans 2:4, what is God's kindness meant to produce in you?

*Romans 11:22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.*

5. God's kindness is meant to keep you from going off track and bringing shame on your life and on others. But if we will not respond to God's kindness what will we face from God?

6. God loves us enough to do whatever He can to keep us from going awry, even if that means us thinking God is bad or unfair.

7. Kindness is rooted in God, and is meant to help people walk with Him, enjoy Him, and live for Him. You, in turn, are to relate to the people around you with the same intent! Undeserved kindness is your calling!