

The Fruit of Kindness

We are given to understand that LOVE (Agape) is the fulfilling of the Law towards one's neighbor (Rom. 13:10). It should be obvious from our previous study on the fruit of longsuffering that love needs to be in our mind or heart in order to be patient and slow to anger with others. We believe the same can be seen in this fruit of kindness—God's love needs to be there also! The fruit of kindness comes out of the love of God in our hearts (1 Cor. 13:4).

The Hebrew word for kindness is CHESED. The Greek word is CHRESTOS. It is generally defined:

1. Being useful, beneficial, or helpful to others;
2. Showing friendship;
3. Being merciful and compassionate.
4. This deals with the motive behind the act.

Kindness being shown by one man to another is detected by:

1. How he speaks: 2 Kings 25:28; Prov 31:26
2. How he acts or by his deeds: Gen 21:23
3. By his attitude: Ruth 1:8

Kindness is:

1. Something commanded: Eph 4:32
2. Something desired to be shown by people: Prov 19:22
3. Something to be returned: 2Sam 2:6

Jesus' admonition: "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48). It is obvious from Scripture and common sense that our attitudes and actions are to be copied after the perfect Being—GOD! The ultimate aspiration of every Christian should be to be like God in all things and in all ways. God has shown His kindness in many ways to man.

1. In the creation: Matt 5:45; Gen 18:21-22
2. To Israel: Neh 9:17; Is 54:8
3. To Sinful men: Titus 3:4-5; Rom 2:4; Eph 2:7

Value of Kindness

Just as the kindness of God leads or motivates men to repent (Rom. 2:4), in the same way the kindness of Christians toward others can achieve good results: Rom 12:20-21

Showing kindness to our enemies rather than evil helps to overcome the problem that exists between them. To say the least, we do not propagate evil by doing evil, but we

overcome evil by doing kind deeds. Kind deeds and attitudes win more victories than returning evil for evil.

Teaching and preaching of the Gospel needs to be done with kindness. Paul expressed it this way: "speaking the truth in love." (Eph. 4:15; 2 Cor. 6:4-7; 2 Tim. 2:24-26). However, the Christian is also to contend for the faith (Jude 3), be set for the defense of the Gospel (Phil. 1:16), and stand fast and strive for the faith of the Gospel (Phil. 1:27). If we look to Jesus for our example, we notice that he plainly rebuked the errors of the Scribes and Pharisees, and called them by name (Matt. 23:13-15, 23, 25-27, 29, etc.). Instead of this being evil, it was the greatest of kindness because He was trying to save their soul. There is no greater kindness to be extended to our fellowman than teaching them God's truth plainly in contrast to the errors of men. To compromise our teaching is to cause people to continue in error and be lost—which is not kind at all. But our attitude and approach must show to those who hear that we are sincerely concerned for their condition and want them to be saved eternally. Kindness does not mean to compromise with error. God hates every false way, and so should we (Ps. 119:104, 128; Heb. 1:9; Rev. 2:15). The Christian needs to realize the harm that error does and be willing to challenge it and oppose it with the right spirit.

http://camphillchurch.org/study_books/FRUIT%20OF%20THE%20SPIRIT,%20Bearing%20the.pdf

My Notes and Thoughts

How would you define Kindness? _____

Think about the story of Joseph. Joseph's brothers were cruel to him, yet a jailer, who was a stranger, was kind! _____

What some current mindsets or attitudes that cause you to be cruel or rude?

How does rudeness counteract kindness? _____

Boaz had no obligation, outside of tradition, to help Ruth ,yet He did. Why did he (Ruth 2:8-16; 3:15)? _____

When have you most been filled with kindness? _____

In what situation did you fail to have kindness when you should have?

What issue is in your life that would improve with more kindness? _____

Kindness in action! Do an act of kindness to a stranger, share with your group your experience _____