

KINDNESS

“Kindness is no small thing. It yields marvelous fruit both in our lives and the lives of those around us.” Stephen Witmer

“Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness and honor.” Proverbs 21:21

Kindness is a word that encapsulates so many other traits and characteristics. It is found throughout the Bible as a **description of the character of God Himself** and it is also a character trait that we as believers are commanded to pursue.

As we have in months pass... let's spend some time brainstorming to come up with your own definition of kindness by doing our regular exercise of synonyms and antonyms.

Synonyms of Kindness:

Antonyms of Kindness:

How would you describe a person that is marked by kindness?

Doing a Bible dictionary search of the word kindness leads to many different Hebrew and Greek words. To truly understand Biblical kindness we need to acknowledge that it encompasses many terms that are overlapping. The Greek and Hebrew words that are often translated into the English word “kindness” or lovingkindness” encompass many shades of meaning . These include things like mercy, pity, grace, favor, compassion, tenderness, and love.

Kindness is first and foremost an attribute of God Himself !!

This is proclaimed throughout Scripture.

Read the following verses and highlight the word “kindness” or lovingkindness in each verse.

*** AFTER EACH VERSE JOT DOWN IN THE BOXES PROVIDED WHAT ACTIONS THE LORD TAKES TO DEMONSTRATE HIS KINDNESS TO MANKIND

“And Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth; keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...

(Exodus 34:5-7) YLT

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'And they and our fathers have acted proudly, and harden their neck, and have not hearkened unto Thy commands, yea, they refuse to hearken, and have not remembered Thy wonders that Thou hast done with them, and harden their neck and appoint a head, to turn back to their service, in their rebellion; and Thou *art* a God of pardons, gracious, and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in kindness, and hast not forsaken them. 'Also, when they have made to themselves a molten calf, and say, this *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and do great despisings, and Thou, in Thine abundant mercies, hast not forsaken them in the wilderness—the pillar of the cloud hath not

turned aside from off them by day, to lead them in the way, and the pillar of the fire by night, to give light to them and the way in which they go. 'And Thy good Spirit Thou hast given, to cause them to act wisely; and Thy manna Thou hast not withheld from their mouth, and water Thou hast given to them for their thirst, and forty years Thou hast nourished them in a wilderness; they have not lacked; their garments have not worn out, and their feet have not swelled.

(Nehemiah 9:16-21) YLT



With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you," Says the LORD, your Redeemer. "For this *is* like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn That the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, So have I sworn That I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

(Isaiah 54:8-10 NKJV)



"Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

(Joel 2:12-13 NKJV)



As you can see, a large part of the kindness of God is expressed in His mercy towards mankind. He relents from punishment and instead shows grace and forgiveness. This is ultimately displayed in God's provision of His Son for us as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Look up the following verses and answer the questions related to them:

Ephesians 2:4-9

What was God's motivation for our salvation?

What condition did He find us in?

Was God's kindness displayed to us because of some intrinsic worth or goodness in us? Yes or No

How did God choose to display the exceeding riches of His grace?

What are we now promised because of God's kindness towards us?

Titus 3: 3-7

Describe our common condition as humans apart from Christ?

What happened to us once the Kindness of God our Savior appeared? List all the benefits we now enjoy because of God's kindness.

Is there anything in either of these passages that suggest God's kindness was in response to any intrinsic goodness in us? _____

IF not ...why does God show kindness to us?

Another verse that speaks of God's Kindness is Romans 2:4

Or do you belittle the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience—not realizing that God's kindness leads you to repentance?

(Romans 2:4 TLV)

This verse again plainly states that the forgiveness of our sin and our salvation and standing before God is solely based and motivated by God's love and kindness. What is interesting is the context of this verse.

Open your Bible and read Romans 2: 1-4. In one word what is Paul discussing in this section? _____

Now read the following parable that Jesus taught in the gospel of Matthew.

'Because of this was the reign of the heavens likened to a man, a king, who did will to take reckoning with his servants, and he having begun to take account, there was brought near to him one debtor of a myriad of talents, and he having nothing to pay, his lord did command him to be sold, and his wife, and the children, and all, whatever he had, and payment to be made. The servant then, having fallen down, was bowing to him, saying, Sir, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; and the lord of that servant having been moved with compassion did release him, and the debt he forgave him. 'And, that servant having come forth, found one of his fellow-servants who was owing him an hundred denaries, and having laid hold, he took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that which thou owest. His fellow-servant then, having fallen down at his feet, was calling on him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; and he would not, but having gone away, he cast him into prison, till he might pay that which was owing. 'And his fellow-servants having seen the things that were done, were grieved exceedingly, and having come, shewed fully to their lord all the things that were done; then having called him, his lord saith to him, Evil servant! all that debt I did forgive thee, seeing thou didst call upon me, did it not behove also thee to have dealt kindly with thy fellow-servant, as I also dealt kindly with thee? 'And having been wroth, his lord delivered him to the inquisitors, till he might pay all that was owing to him; so also my heavenly

Father will do to you, if ye may not forgive each one his brother from your hearts their trespasses.'

(Matthew 18:23-35 YLT)

Based on your prayerful consideration of Romans 2:1-4 and Matthew 18: 23-35, how should the realization of God's kindness towards us dictate our treatment of others? Our judgement towards others?

Write a prayer of thanksgiving below for God's mercy and kindness towards you. Ask Him to fill you with His spirit so that you may display this type of kindness/mercy towards others, especially those who have offended/hurt us.

One of the Greek words that is translated into the English word Kindness in some translations is the word “Chrestotes” It speaks of moral excellence, gentleness, goodness and interestingly...it also implies USEFULNESS.

I think that is very intriguing. It speaks to us that the Kindness God displays is USEFUL..it is PRACTICAL. God’s Kindness is useful to us. And the Kindness we show others should be useful to them.

It is also noteworthy that this Greek word is the basis of the word used in the following verse:

Mat 11:29-30 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 (kind, gentle, useful)and My burden is light."

When we are yoked with Jesus, living the WAY Jesus lived, we will live a life of kindness, gentleness and usefulness to those around us!!!

Some thoughts on Kindness:

Kindness has been described as “Grace Expressed”.

Kindness is the *outward activity* of a heart that is motivated by love for others.

Kindness is the opposite of selfishness and self-seeking.

Kindness seeks another’s higher good and will go to great lengths to meet the needs of others.

We see that God has shown this kindness to mankind, all through the ages, despite our fickleness and propensity for sin.

We are now commanded to do the same for others.

As we saw in the parable of the unforgiving servant, Jesus spoke to us about how important it is that we should display kindness, mercy and compassion to others.

Read the selection from the gospel of Luke below. Grab some highlighters or colored pencils. Highlight every time there is an imperative/command to us from the Lord in one color. Highlight the object of the command in a different color. The first set is done for you .

"But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

Now to emphasize His point Jesus asks some rhetorical questions.

"But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.

Who expresses kindness in these circumstances? _____

But now Jesus distinguishes the difference between godly kindness and worldly kindness and it boils down to motivation.

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

(Luke 6:27-36 NKJV)

Worldly kindness is motivated by the hope of getting something in return but godly Kindness has its motivation in the fact that we have been shown mercy and kindness from God despite our ingratitude and sinfulness. No one else may see or appreciate our displays of kindness but God will see !!!

Digging Deeper:

For kindness I desired, and not sacrifice, And a knowledge of God above burnt-offerings.

(Hosea 6:6 YLT)

With what shall I come before the LORD, *And* bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, The fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy (kindness), And to walk humbly with your God?

(Micah 6:6-8 NKJV)

and the Pharisees having seen, said to his disciples, 'Wherefore with the tax-gatherers and sinners doth your teacher eat?' And Jesus having heard, said to them, 'They who are whole have no need of a physician, but they who are ill; but having gone, learn ye what is, Kindness I will, and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call righteous men, but sinners, to reformation.'

(Matthew 9:11-13 YLT)

What do these verses tell us about the emphasis God puts upon being kind and merciful?

How does being kind measure up to other types of religious activities in God's estimation?

How does it express that we are truly His children?

Kindness is Commanded

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

(Ephesians 4:30-32 NKJV)

Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*.

(Colossians 3:12-13 NKJV)

What is not to be observed or heard from the life of a follower of Jesus?

What are the characteristics that should be observed in the life of a follower of Jesus?

“While you may feel like the kindest person in the world, kindness has more to do with how the people around you feel about you than how you feel about them.”

Hayley DiMarco from her book [The Fruitful Wife](#)

Based on the descriptions in the two passages above and the quote from Hayley DiMarco, do you think others would describe you as a person of great kindness?

How can we possibly live this life of Kindness, showing grace and mercy to those around us...even those who are unkind, selfish, angry, taking advantage of us etc?

The Solution: Abide in Him

Abide : to dwell, rest, continue, stand firm, or be stationary for anytime indefinitely.

1. To rest, or dwell.
2. To tarry or stay for a short time.
3. To continue permanently or in the same state; to be firm and immovable.
4. To remain, to continue.

Joh 15:4 **Abide** in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you **abide** in Me.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may **abide** with you forever—

1Jn 2:28 And now, little children, **abide** in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

1Jn 4:13 By this we know that we **abide** in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

Solution: Walk in the Spirit

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

(Galatians 5:16-25 NKJV)