

KINDNESS

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

What is kindness?

χρηστότης (*chrēstotēs*), **benevolence**, usefulness, provide something as an act of kindness ¹

Kindness in Action

The highest act of kindness is that to someone is not deserving of it. The same way God gave Himself for us while we were not deserving.

Luke 6:35 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 Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.

Results of Kindness

You win people to you, not only the people to whom you show kindness, but the people who hear of your kindness. Boaz heard of Ruth's kindness & that caused him to think highly of her – before he knew her.

Ruth 3:10-11 Then he said, "May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. You have shown your last kindness to be better than the first by not going after young men, whether poor or rich. "Now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence. (NASB)

Kindness is returned to us. When Rahab showed kindness to the spies by letting them hide in her house, that kindness was not only returned to her, but to her whole family.

Joshua 2:12-14 "Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you." (NASB)

Others are lead to repentance. When we show kindness to people, they are receiving God's kindness through us and God's kindness leads us to repentance.

Romans 2:4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? (NASB)

"Here we have another example of how what we have received freely from God (in this case, God's kindness while we were in our sins) demands a response. It demands that we repent of our own sins and extend loving kindness to others in their sins. Indeed, we must extend *chrēstotēs* to others if we are to reveal that God's kindness has "taken" effect in our own lives. God's kindness is meant to heal us of our unkindness, God's mercy from our unmercy."²

¹ Swanson, James. 1997. In *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*, electronic ed. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

² Crosby, M. (2015). *Fruit of the Spirit : Pauline Mysticism for the Church Today*. ORBIS.

GOODNESS

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

What is goodness?

To have goodness is to have virtue: a conformity to a standard of right. Our standard of right is found in the Lord.

“Goodness resides in the character of God. The only reason human beings know anything about goodness is because the One who created us is good. The idea that God is good was an unorthodox idea in the pagan nations surrounding Israel and later in the context of the Roman and Greek gods surrounding the early Christians. Unlike the one true God, pagan gods were seen as temperamental, demanding and indifferent to human feelings. J. I. Packer draws this contrast: “In place of a cluster of gods who are all too obviously made in the image of man, and who behave like a crowd of Hollywood film stars, the Bible sets the one almighty Creator, the only real God, in whom all goodness and truth find their source, and to whom all moral evil is abhorrent.”³

How do I have goodness?

Learn what is good. If you want to do what is right according to the LORD. You’ll need to find out what that is. Actively study the WORD, learn from the ministry of the WORD (preaching), ask Him in prayer, ask others.

Ephesians 5:8-10 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is **good** and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. (ESV)

Psalms 143:10 Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is **good**. Lead me in the land of uprightness. (ESV)

Goodness in Action

You teach goodness to others. If you are full of God’s goodness, it should flow out from you so that others can learn how to have goodness in their own lives.

Romans 15:14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. (ESV)

Do what the Lord does. Since God is good, let’s look at what He does and apply those principles to our own actions & choices.

What do these verses say about God’s goodness? How can we exemplify that in our lives?

Psalm 23:6 | Psalm 31:19-20 | Psalm 34:8-10 | Psalm 86:5 | Psalm 119:65-68

³ Hazel Offner, Dale Larsen, & Sandy Larsen. (2013). A Deeper Look at the Fruit of the Spirit: Growing in the Likeness of Christ. IVP Connect.