

## **The Fruit of the Spirit is Kindness**

### **Galatians 5:22**

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Radio Transcript:

What does true kindness look like? Let's find out together today on Change by Grace. Welcome to Change by Grace. I'm pastor Steve Hereford. Today we're exploring the fruit of the spirit known as kindness as mentioned in Galatians 5:22.

How can we cultivate this essential quality in our daily walk with Christ? Well, let's answer this question and many others as we study together today from Galatians chapter 5. We are looking again this morning at bad and good habits, paying particular attention to good habits or we may call good fruit. So please take your bibles and turn with me to the book of Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5.

We're currently looking at verses 22 and 23 in what is commonly referred to as the fruit of the spirit. We've already looked at love, joy, peace, and patience. And now this morning, we're looking at kindness. Kindness. It says in verse 22, but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control against such things there is no law.

Now all of us have experienced kindness. We have shown kindness. But how is kindness defined in this passage? As the other eight listed here, this one too is of the spirit. And kindness is certainly one attitude in which it shows how we treat each other.

And when we walk by the means of the Spirit, we will be kind in addition to being loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, as well as the rest, if you remember that it says the fruit of the spirit, not the fruits. We tend to think that because there are 9 listed here that this would be individual fruit, but it's all collectively one fruit. You get 1, you get all. And that's the beautiful thing about this. And how you get this, of course, is by what it says in verse 16, Walk by the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust or the desires of the flesh.

So you this is produced in your life as a result of walking by the means of the Spirit. Now as we look at this one this morning, again it's the word kindness. Kindness. And the word that Paul uses here for kindness is the Greek word, krestotis. I know that doesn't mean anything to you, but it does when you're looking at different words and studying to see what they mean.

And this one is that word. And the word itself refers to a tender concern for others, a tender concern for others. I know sometimes when you're speaking to your kids or your grandkids, you might not have a tender concern about something that they're interested in at the moment. But then on the other hand there are times when you do have that tender concern and sometimes you feel it well up in your heart, sometimes it shows up in the watery eyes. But this word here is a state of being that includes attributes like of loving affection, sympathy, friendliness, patience, pleasantness, gentleness, goodness.

That's what's all wrapped up in this word kindness. So it's a quality shown in the way a person speaks and a way that a person acts. This word is more volitional than it is emotional. When I talk about the welling up of the eyes, that's emotion. But this is volitional, doing deeds of kindness, acts of kindness.

In fact, William Barclay says that kindness helps. It helps people. And so this word, *krestotase*, it's always sweet, it's kind, it's mild, it's full of graciousness. But we must understand that it has nothing to do with weakness, has nothing to do with a lack of conviction, but it is the genuine desire of a believer to treat others gently just as the Lord treats him. Now I know sometimes we've been in places and experiencing the responses of believers and it hasn't always been tender, has it?

It hasn't always been gracious or shows of affection of love or pleasant or any of those things or even friendly. You know, we could probably all recount times in our life of those business meetings where things got heated up and that should never be the case. If we're all walking in the spirit then none of that stuff would ever happen. Right? Same as how we treat one another away from situations like that or individually or someone offends you in one way or another.

We were talking a little bit about this morning how unforgiveness hinders our prayers. So we need to be those that are people that forgive because we have been forgiven, right? Well, let me give you some examples of this word. Sometimes it's helpful to see things in action. In this case, we can see this in action.

If you'd like to take your Bible and turn to Genesis chapter 40. In Genesis chapter 40, Joseph wanted pharaoh's butler to show kindness by remembering him to pharaoh. If you remember, Joseph's brothers hated him immensely because he would go and give a report to his father about what his brothers were doing, and, of course they would get in some kind of trouble or have some kind of problem with their father. And of course, it didn't make things helpful for his for their father to make Joseph this coat of many colors and never did that for the rest of the 11 kids, that would pre create some sibling rivalry, of course. And, there was on one occasion where Joseph's father had sent him to check on his brothers and they had moved the flock to Dothan.

And when they saw him coming they were plotting on what they were gonna do to him because they hated him so much. Well, after all things came about, they decided to throw him into this abandoned well, of which they did. And then they were wanting to, of course, kill him. One brother didn't want that to happen so they saw some Midianite traders coming, they decided to trade him to the Midianite traders and he was gone, he was out of their hair, they concocted this big elaborate idea that he had been eaten by a wild animal, they took his coat of many colors, they dipped it in the blood of a goat, and they took it back to their father and said, does this belong to your son? And they knew it did.

And so they lived with this lie for a period of time. Well, in the passage of time, Joseph goes into Egypt, and the whole time Joseph's in Egypt, God is showing him favor and kindness. But there was one occasion when Potiphar's wife had made advances to him and he refused and he fled out of there, but he fled and left his garment. And she used that garment to accuse him of wanting to have a sexual relationship with her, so he was thrown into jail. He spent 2 years in jail, by the way.

But the Lord was with him while he was there and while he was there, there were 2 men in the jail that had these weird dreams. You have weird dreams? Yes, we have them too. Cody woke up this morning and said, How did I get to the couch? Cody sleepwalks.

And sometimes he wakes us up, sometimes he comes in there and talks to us. I tried to record it the other night when he did it and I was just messing with him and he didn't know what was going on. And, but that's just kinda stuff that happens. And it says in Genesis 40 verse 1, Then it came about after these things the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. They were was furious with his 2 officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker.

So he put them in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard in the jail, the same place where Joseph was imprisoned. The captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of them and he took care of them and they were in confinement for some time. Then the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt who were confined in jail both had a dream the same night, each man with his own dream and each dream with its own interpretation. When Joseph came to them in the morning and observed them, behold, they were dejected. And he asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, why are your faces so sad today?

Then they said to him, we have had a dream and there is no one to interpret it. Then Joseph said to them, do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it to me, please. So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and he said to him, in my dream, behold, there was a vine in front of me and on the vine were 3 branches and it was budding. Its blossoms came out and its clusters produced ripe grapes.

Now pharaoh's cup was in my hand, so I took the grapes and squeezed them in pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into pharaoh's hand. Then Joseph said to him, this is the interpretation of it. The 3 branches are 3 days. Within 3 more days, pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office and you will put pharaoh's cup into his hand according to your former custom when you were his cupbearer. Only keep me in mind when it does when it goes well with you and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to pharaoh and get me out of this house.

I could just imagine what the emotion was. But of course all of this happened and he did not remember Joseph until it came a time when pharaoh was having dreams and there was no one who can interpret Pharaoh's dreams. And then finally it came to this man's mind that there was a man in the jail that I was in who could interpret dreams and that's when Joseph was taken out of jail. But a full 2 years had elapsed. Could you imagine going through something like that?

You've been falsely accused, you're in a place that you didn't deserve to be in, and you helped someone else get out and they don't remember you. They forgot all about you and didn't help plead your case. Well, that was the kind of situation that happened to Joseph. And he says, please show me kindness. Please do me a kindness by mentioning me to pharaoh.

And so you see there with our working definition, that is treating someone with tender concern, He didn't have any concern for Joseph, he had more concern about himself. He got his job back. He went back and worked for the king. Not only do we see this in Joseph's request for kindness, but we also see Rahab requested a kind treatment from Israel for her protection of the 2 spies who had come into her house. If you'd like to follow along, Joshua chapter 2 and verse 8 says this.

Now before they lay down, that is the spies, remember she hid them among the flax up there on the roof, and when the people from the king came looking for these spies, she hid them, told them that that maybe they got out the gate before the gate closed and when they left, she went and talked to them. And it says before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof and said to the men, I know that the

lord has given you the land and that the terror of you has fallen on us and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. For you have heard how the Lord dried up the water or we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt and what you did to the 2 kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you. For the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Do you think that she became a Christian? She became a follower of Jesus. She obviously believed the truth about God right here. It says, now therefore please swear to me by the Lord since I have dealt kindly with you and that you also will deal kindly with my father's household and give me a pledge of truth and spare my father, my mother, my brothers and my sisters with all who belong to them and deliver our lives from death. And see, she uses that word twice, deal kindly with us.

And again, have tender concern for us. We helped you, you help us. That was kinda the case here and they did. They did help and deliver her and her family. We find another situation that before he attacked Amalek, Saul had asked the Kenites to leave the Amalekite territory.

Not wanting to kill them along with the Amalekites because of the kindness that they had shown Israel when Israel came up from Egypt, this is recorded in 1st Samuel 15. Verse 6 says, Saul said to the Kenites, go, depart. Go down from among the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you with them, for you showed kindness to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt, so the Cainites departed from among the Amalekites. Kindness is something that permeates the Bible and kindness is something that should permeate our lives. David had even commended the men of Jabesh Gilead for the kindness that they had shown Saul in giving his body a decent burial.

It says in 2nd Samuel 2:5, David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead and said unto unto them, may you be blessed of the Lord because you have shown this kindness to Saul your Lord and have buried him. Now may the lord show kindness and truth to you and I also will show this goodness to you because you have done this thing. Now therefore let your hands be strong and be valiant, for Saul your lord is dead and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them. Again, asking for tender concern tender concern. Jonathan.

We all know about Jonathan, that was one of Saul's sons. And Jonathan and David were best friends. And Jonathan had requested unfailing kindness of David so that he would not be killed. 1 Samuel 20:14 says, if I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the Lord that I may not die? You shall not cut off your lovingkindness from my house forever, not even when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.

In other words, when I and my father are gone, will you continue to show your lovingkindness to my family? And so David extended this kindness we find in 2nd Samuel 9 when he extended it to Jonathan's son by granting him the right to eat at the king's table. Y'all remember him when I read the story. It says in 2nd Samuel 9, then David said, is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Zilba and they called him to David.

And the king said to him, are you Ziba? And he said, I am your servant. The king said, is not there yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God? And Ziba said to the king, there is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet. So the king said to him, where is he?

And Ziba said to the king, behold, he is in the house of Machur, the son of Emilio, in Lo Debar. Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machur the son of Emilio from Lobedar. Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan the son of Saul came to David, fell on his face, prostrated himself, and David said, Mephibosheth. And he said, here is your servant. David said to him, do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul and you shall eat at my table regularly.

You know, a new king is in town. Everybody fears the new king. Afraid if there were any descendants from the previous king, they would all be killed, wiped out, and that wasn't the case here. He showed him kindness. He had tender concern.

Now, you go into the New Testament, you find the same thing. Paul reminded the Thessalonians that even though he was an Apostle, he proved to be gentle among them as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. He was very tender with them. If you remember, we've been studying 1 Thessalonians on Wednesday night. And they came into that city in the midst of persecution.

They came in the midst of all the trouble for the Jews wanting to stir up, and not just the Jews but the Gentiles stirring up all of the havoc that occurred during that time. These men have turned the world upside down and now come here also. And of course these Thessalonians believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. We also see Jesus' kindness is the believer's example when you read in Matthew 19:13, Some children were brought to Him so that He might lay his hands on them and pray and the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said, let the children alone and do not hinder them from coming to me for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

Now, that was a rebuke. They're saying Jesus is too busy to see your children. It's what they were telling the parents. But Jesus said, let the children come to me. That is tender concern.

That is kindness. Even on another occasion, he said in Matthew 11:28, he said, come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls. Have we not experienced that? Coming to Christ, taking his yoke, finding that he is gentle, he's humble in heart and he has provided rest.

Rest. And little do we know that's what we're looking for, but that's what God gives us when He saves us. He gives us rest, rest from all the labors of trying to please Him or please someone. And over in 2 Timothy 2:24, another place, Just as the Lord is kind, His servants are commanded not to be quarrelsome, but to be kind to all, kind to all. So again, think about these definitions that we talked about here.

Having tender concern for others, having loving affection, sympathy, friendliness, patience, pleasantness, gentleness, goodness. This is how we speak. This is what comes across our lips. This is how we act when we are with people. We are helping.

We have this graciousness in our deeds. And all of this is really important, as again you see all the examples that we just looked at. And so when we think about kindness, there's some other things that we could think about. God's kindness, just like His patience that we looked at last week, leads sinners to repentance, because God is kind, because God is patient. God not giving us what we deserve but being patient to us, it says in Romans 2:4, or do you think lightly of the riches of his kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing the kindness of God, leads you to repentance?

I don't know what the ages were for you when you came to know the Lord. I was 19 when I came to know the Lord. And having done a lot of crazy stupid things I've told you about on other occasions. But I look back and I think, you know, 19 is young, but still the Lord was patient with me. The Lord showed His kindness to me.

I mean, I could have died with all the stuff that I was doing easily, very easily, but the Lord was kind. The Lord was patient. The Lord was kind and patient in that he sent someone who was also kind and patient to keep sharing the love of Christ with me. My coming to Christ was not on just one hearing of the good news, the gospel. It was on several occasions and with that same person.

And the Lord sent him at the right time. Of course, the Lord's timing is perfect, right? Our timing is not always. But He'd always show up in my time the wrong time, but it was the right time. Does that make sense?

Yes, just nod your head. And he would show up and he would love me by sharing the truth with me. And I told you this and I'll keep saying it till I die, that he told me, Steve, you can be forgiven of all your sin. Now I didn't know I needed to be forgiven of anything. I didn't know that I'd really offended a holy god.

I didn't even know god was a holy god. I had some background of Bible and background of church, but meshing meshing the 2 together and living, they weren't there. I did what I wanted to do and everybody else did what they were supposed to do and I started hanging around with people that I shouldn't have been hanging around with that were great influencers in my life and I did what they did and you know the story. Look, God was kind and He was tolerant. Isn't He kind and tolerant and patient with us even now as believers?

I mean, just because we came to know Jesus doesn't mean we stop sinning, Right? It doesn't mean we never do anything wrong, never mess anything up, never say the wrong thing, never hurt anybody, never do anything that hurts somebody. It doesn't mean any of that because we do still mess up. Take David, Psalm 51, as he confesses his sin. And it took him a while to get to that point because he kept holding back, refusing to confess it.

How many times have you done that where you've held onto something, you refused to acknowledge that it was sin, you kept saying in your mind you didn't do anything wrong, But then reality finally hit you that you were wrong and you needed to confess this and you needed to get this right before the Lord. Over in Titus 3 Go ahead and turn there to Titus 3. I want you to see this one. In Titus chapter 3 is Paul is bringing his letter to a conclusion as he writes to this man Titus. He has some things to say in chapter 3 in addition to what he's already said, but he says remind them, verse 1, to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

This is the way he wanted them to presently act. This is the way that they were to behave now as being in Christ. And that right there alone tells you that not everybody does act the way they should act in Christ. They have to be told to act this way. Right?

And then he brings up the past. For you also once were foolish yourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lust and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our savior. He gave us the Holy Spirit. He saved us.

He forgave us. He washed us clean. And that was through His kindness and what else? His mercy. Wasn't based upon anything that we could have done.

It was based upon everything that He did. And so God's kindness leads us to repentance. And why is that? Because God is kind. Just as we've looked at all these other things, God is love, God is joy, God is peace, God is patience, and God is kind.

The psalmist said this, give thanks to the Lord for he is kind. Now, that's Old Testament. You say well, that's not Greek. Greek is New Testament. Here's this.

There is a Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. And in the Septuagint, that verse, the word kind is the same word used in Galatians 5:22. God is kind. God is tenderhearted. God has tender concern.

God even has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, the Bible tells us. God loves in a way that you and I could only love being in Christ, right? But He is kind. Psalm 34 and verse 8. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is kind.

Is that where it's translated in 1st Peter, kind. And He is kind. And again, remember what David said in 2nd Samuel 9:3? Is there not anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God? God was kind to him.

God spared him. Even though he ran around from 12 years running from Saul and all that he went through during that time, God still spared his life, God still was with him and God was showing kindness to him. You might have a hard life. You might have a lot of things that go on in your life that are not pleasant, but God still shows His kindness. Think about this and here's where kindness comes in for all of us.

When we were unbelieving and we were not saved, if God had allowed us to die, where would we be? We wouldn't be in heaven. Like that one pastor said, not everyone talking about heaven is going to heaven. As you talk about it, that mean you're going there. That comes with a relationship to the savior.

That here, God is kind. He shows that kindness. And even in the New Testament, Paul always speaks of the kindness of God and even speaks of it as being manifested in Jesus Christ. The fruit of the spirit is kindness. That's the title of our message today and it's taken from Galatians chapter 5 and verse 22.

To get your copy of this message on one full audio CD, give us a call at 904-651-3351. If you prefer, you can download the free mp3 from our website by visiting us at [www.changedbygrace.org](http://www.changedbygrace.org). Well, I'm pastor Steve Hereford. I do wanna thank you for joining us today and I hope that you'll join us again next time as we study God's word. Hi.

I'm pastor Steve Hereford and I want to invite you to visit our website at [www.changedbygrace.org](http://www.changedbygrace.org) where you can take advantage of many of our resources. One in particular is our scripture memory system. We use music to help you lock scripture into your mind. As you learn the songs, you automatically memorize scripture. Visit our site and give it a try at [www.changedbygrace.org](http://www.changedbygrace.org).

You can also hear it on many of the online music platforms like Spotify. Again, thank you for listening and we hope that you'll lock the scripture in your mind. Things through Christ.

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