



## Clothed in Kindness

by Bonnie Merkle

*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.*

Colossians 3:12-13

### Ubiquitous Nature of Kindness

*The LORD is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works.*

Psalm 145:9

### Kindness Expanded

In English, Hebrew, and Greek, kindness synonyms are overlapping and not clearly or consistently distinguishable in meaning. Goodness, mercy, pity, love, grace, compassion, gentleness, tenderness and many more encompass the many-sided meaning of kindness.

# Kindness Defined

Kindness as spiritual fruit links the spiritual qualities of kindness and goodness and has been described as a “sincere desire for the happiness of others. Goodness is the activity calculated to advance that happiness. Kindness is the inner disposition, created by the Holy Spirit, that causes us to be sensitive to the needs of others . . . Goodness is kindness in action – words and deeds.”

Jerry Bridges

- **A fruit of the Spirit**

- *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,<sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

- **Resulting from the spirit of biblical love**

- *Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant.*

I Corinthians 13:4

# Kindness Exemplified

- Rebekah and Abraham’s servant
- Ruth and Boaz
- Abigail and David
- David and Jonathan
- The Good Samaritan
- The natives of Malta

# “Putting On” Kindness Toward Your Teen

“Kindness is in our power,  
even when fondness is not.”  
Samuel Johnson

- **Rejuvenate your joy**
  
- **Strive to understand physical changes**
  - Brain
  
  - Sleep needs
  
  - Hormones
  
- **Build a relationship rather than a dictatorship**
  - Inquire vs. interrogate
  - Compliment vs. criticize
  - Encourage vs. embarrass
  - Trust vs. doubt
  - Apologize vs. attack
  - Listen vs. lecture

# Listening: A Profound Act of Kindness

“Kindness does not require us to be blind to facts or to live in fancies, but it does require us to cherish a habit of goodwill, ready to show pity if sorrow appears, and slow to turn away even if hostility appears.”

Alexander MacLaren

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Philippians 2:3-4

- **Listening: Critical Yet Difficult**
- **Listening Logistics**
  - When?
  - Where?
- **Listening Actively**
  - Prompts
    - Non-verbal
      - Smile
      - Eye contact
      - Posture
      - Mirroring
    - Verbal
      - Positive reinforcement
      - Remembering
      - Questioning
      - Reflection
      - Summarization

- Habits
  - Selective listening
  - Formulating a response
  - Making assumptions
  
- Skills
  - Stop talking
  - Prepare yourself to listen
  - Put the speaker at ease
  - Remove distractions
  - Empathize
  - Be patient
  - Avoid personal prejudice
  - Listen to the tone
  - Listen for ideas – not just words
  - Wait and watch for non-verbals
  
- ***Scriptural Insights into Listening***
  - Proverbs 10:19 – *When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.*
  - Proverbs 15:1 – *A gentle answer turns away wrath: but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
  - Proverbs 17:27 – *He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.*
  - Proverbs 17:28 – *Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is considered prudent.*
  - Proverbs 18:2 – *A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind.*
  - Proverbs 18:13 – *He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*
  - Proverbs 18:15 – *The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.*

- Ephesians 4:1-3 – *Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup> being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
- Titus 3:2 – *To malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.*
- James 1:19b – *But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*

## Encouragements

“Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace.”

Jerry Bridges

- II Chronicles 15:7 – *But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work.*
- I Corinthians 15:58 – *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.*
- Galatians 6:9 – *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.*
- Philippians 4:13 – *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*
- Colossians 3:23-24 – *Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*

## So Do Ye Also

My word has drawn the desolate  
and quenched their thirst for love.  
My prayer has eased the destitute  
and fed them from above.

And yet you turn and ask of me,  
And yet you turn and ask of me,  
Lord, who then is my neighbor?

My hand has touched the blind man's eyes  
and opened them to light.

My ear has heard the widow's cries  
and raised a son to life.

And now you turn and ask of me,  
And now you turn and ask of me,  
Lord, which of us is greatest?

My heart will bear the traitor's kiss  
yet I will call him friend.

My soul sees all your sinfulness  
yet loves you without end.

And can you turn and ask of me,  
And can you turn and ask of me,  
Lord, must we be forgiving?

### Chorus:

Though I be very God,  
yet willingly I serve you.

For I the Sinless Son  
love sinners unto death.

As I have done,  
As I have done,  
So do ye also.

*CCLI: 1967036*

## Sources

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*So Do Ye Also* music by Joan Pinkston; lyrics by Donnalynn Hess

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