

**Galatians 5: 22f; “The Believer’s Kindness”, Message # 46 in the series –
“Christ has Set us Free”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
April 21st, 2024, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

It is always good to check the original Greek when studying a section of Scripture such as this, because the translators of even excellent translations may differ in the way that they translate a particular word. The word that we are studying tonight is translated “gentleness” in the King James Translation. But in the NAS, NKJV, and the ESV versions it is translated – “kindness”. Interestingly, in the newer translations, the word in the King James, “meekness”, 3 words down in this list from the word that we are studying, is translated – “gentleness” in the NAS and NKJV, as well as the ESV.

From what I can tell, the word that we are studying tonight ought to be translated “kindness”. The word is χρησιότης (kray-stot-es). Strong’s Dictionary defines it as “usefulness”, “that is, moral excellence in character or demeanor): gentleness, good or goodness, and kindness”. The word three words down from this in the list of the fruit of the Spirit is πραΰτης (prah-oo-tace) in the Greek. And it appears that the newer translations are right in translating it either meekness or gentleness. Strong’s defines it as “mildness”, that is (by implication) humility: - meekness”.

So, this is how I will approach explaining to you this fruit of the Spirit. I want you to understand how important kindness is to walking in the Spirit and bearing lasting fruit unto God. 1st of all – It is important to be kind because it is a grace which we learn from God Himself. And 2nd – It is important to be kind because without it we cannot be useful to God or helpful to people around us. In other words, if we do not have kindness and show kindness, we cannot glorify God whom we desire to serve.

1st of all – It is important to be kind because it is a grace which we learn from God Himself.

Turn with me over to Titus Chapter 3, verses 3-6. “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.” “But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Now, you can see from verse 3 that before we came to Christ, before we were regenerated by the Holy Spirit, before we were converted to Christ we were “living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.” This is what characterized our lives, many of us. Malice is bearing ill-will towards other people. “Envy is a feeling of discontent or mortification; that is, a sense of humiliation and shame caused by something that wounds your pride or self-respect.” “This is usually accompanied with some degree of ill-will, excited by the contemplation of another’s superiority, advantages, or success; a covetous desire for some advantage possessed by another.” (Century Dictionary) In other words, you would like to have what another person has and you don’t think well of them because they have it; and you do not.

But let us think together of what kind of a fixed attitude of kindness our God has toward all men in the gospel. The kindness and love of God our Savior toward man, that is, all mankind, was shown, and has appeared, in God the Father’s sending Christ and giving Him to all the world. And then when His work of righteousness and sufferings was finished, God’s good will toward mankind further came to be seen through His commanding that the gospel be preached to all the nations. When Christ first appeared in His Incarnation, He appeared as the kindness and love of God personified. He appeared as God the Father’s gift to mankind-sinners.

It should be understood that even though God was, and is, angry toward unrepentant and rebellious man, that still, because His own essential nature is love, God pitied men in their sinful state. Therefore He sent His Son, and having sent His Son, His will of desire is shown in the gospel; that is, that He would have all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1st Timothy 2: 4) This is His kindness, and this is His general love, for all mankind. The gospel of Christ; the saving truths of His perfect righteousness and His sufferings for sinners on the cross, are therefore to be preached and shared with everyone we can share them with, so that they might believe and be saved.

We can also say, with just as great a certainty, that when the gospel comes with the power of the Holy Spirit to the heart of any person whom God has chosen to save, that He saves them not according to the works of righteousness which they have done, but according to His mercy, He saves them, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He pours out on that person abundantly, through Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace they should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” This is His special electing love and saving grace being shown not in a general sense, but in a particular sense, according to His eternal purpose. These truths stand side by side and do not contradict each other.

It is this reality of the general kindness and love of God toward mankind which forms the basis of the Christian’s having a kind attitude towards people around them, and exhibiting this same kind of good-will as God has; having a general love for all men and for their highest welfare, both physical and spiritual. This attitude of kindness should be shown even to our enemies, if we are a Christian. Turn with me over to Luke Chapter 6, and verses 35 and 36. “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 (χρηστός, Krees-tos) to the unthankful and evil.” “Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

We see here that the mercy of God which is being shown to evil and ungrateful men is His mercy toward their temporal needs. God gives many good earthly things to rebellious, unrepentant sinners; watching over their needs and doing good to them in many ways too numerous to count, and yet they do not come to Him in order that they might find life in Jesus Christ. And yet in His attitude of kindness He is often patient with them far longer and beyond what they deserve.

An example of how kindness is of great value in the relationships between all men is found in 2nd Samuel chapter 2, and verses 4-10. “Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.” “And they told David, saying, “The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul.” “So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, “You are blessed of the Lord, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him.” “And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing.”

“Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.” “But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul’s army, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel.” “Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years.” “Only the house of Judah followed David.” “And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.”

Now, you will notice that David has been anointed king by the men of Judah, after king Saul died. It was the will of the Lord that this be so, because the Lord had rejected Saul from being king over Israel. We see here David’s kindness to the men of Jabesh Gilead who buried Saul after he had been taken by the Philistines in battle, wounded, and fell on his own sword so that the enemy would not abuse him when they found him. The Philistines had found him after the battle

and they fastened his body, and the bodies of his sons to the wall of Beth Shan. The valiant men of Jabesh took the bodies of Saul and his sons down off of the wall and came to Jabesh and burned them there, and took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days. David commends them for this saying that they had shown this kindness to Saul in burying him. He further blesses them with a benedictory prayer saying, “And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you.” “And I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing.”

Then he makes an appeal to them to join with him, pay their allegiance to him as their newly anointed king. Now that Saul was dead and Judah had anointed him king, he wanted to show them his good will; that he would treat them with kindness. But Abner, the commander of Saul’s army had other ideas of perpetuating the house of Saul; ideas which would benefit him becoming the commander of the armies of Israel. He took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him to reign over Israel in Saul’s place.

I show you this to give you a good example of the kindness of David. This was an evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in him, that he persevered in showing kindness, even to his enemies, because he knew that God would want it to be shown them. He commends the men of Jabesh for their kindness and then attempts to let all men in Israel know, his own kindness in the way that he would rule them.

2nd – It is important to be kind because without it we cannot be useful to God or helpful to people around us.

Turn with me over to Romans 12, verses 9-17. “Let love be without hypocrisy.” “Abhor what is evil.” “Cling to what is good.” “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.” “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.” “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.” “Be of the same mind toward one another.” “Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble.” “Do not be wise in your own opinion.” “Repay no one evil for evil.” “Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.”

Now, as you think about these commandments I hope that you can see that the only way that they can be kept to the glory of God and to the lasting help of people around you is if they are done in and by the Spirit’s power. Love is a fruit of the Spirit. Being kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love takes the Spirit’s power. To be rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, steadfast in prayer, and helping the saints through hospitality; all of these require the Spirit’s working in your heart and mind for them to be done to the glory of God. Oh, yes, you could go about to do these good works out of a sense of duty, but it would not be what God is looking for from you.

No, to be truly useful to God, in your service to Him, you must become, if you are not already, a kind person. To be a kind person you must learn to think about others besides yourself; to think of how you can show them kindness. Kindness is an attitude of thinking of others in a kindly way, but it leads to acts of kindness. To give you a good example of this, I want you to turn with me over to the book of 2nd Samuel once again. This time, we will look at chapter 9. David is now reigning over all of the kingdom of Israel, and God had established him in his kingdom, and given him great promises of what he would do for him and for his people; He would build David a house.

And so, it is with this in mind, that we read in 2nd Samuel 9, verse 1 – “Now David said, “Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?” “And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba.” “So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?” “He said, “At your service!” “Then the king said, “Is there not still someone 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 lame in his feet.” “So the king said to him, “Where is he?” “And Ziba said to the king, “Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.” “Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.”

“Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, “Mephibosheth?” “And he answered, “Here is your servant!” “So David said to him, “Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father’s sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.” “Then he bowed himself, and said, “What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?” “And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, “I have given to your master’s son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house.” “You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in the harvest, that your master’s son may have food to eat.

But Mephibosheth your master’s son shall eat bread at my table always.” “Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.” “Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do.” “As for Mephibosheth,” said the king, “he shall eat at my table like one of the king’s sons.” “Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micha.” “And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth.” “So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king’s table.” “And he was lame in both his feet.”

Now, in closing this study, I want you to notice a few things about David’s kindness. David was thinking about how he could show kindness to the house of Saul, his former enemy. The fact that he was thinking this way shows that the Holy Spirit was working in his heart to bring these thoughts of doing good to the forefront of his mind. It is true that he was wanting to do some good thing for the household of Saul, “for Jonathan’s sake”. It was Jonathan who had practically laid down his life for him in appealing to Saul his father that he would do David no harm. In this, Jonathan is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ who really did lay down His life for our sakes.

And therefore David’s wanting to show kindness for Jonathan’s sake is, and it should be, a type of the believer’s wanting to show kindness for Christ’s sake; to do acts of kindness ourselves because we know the One who has shown us the ultimate kindness, and the highest of sacrificial love in dying for our sins. But David wanted to show Mephibosheth the kindness of sitting and eating at his table like one of the king’s sons; to have him eat bread at his table, all of his days. David knew that in order for him to have a good life, he would need his father’s lands returned to him, and servants to work the land and take care of Mephibosheth.

They would bring in the harvest, that his master’s son would have food to eat. So he appointed Ziba, Saul’s servant, to work the land, along with his fifteen sons and 20 servants. In this regard he is a good example to all of us. Love your neighbor as yourself, and you will be fulfilling the law of God in relation to Jesus Christ who is the only One who has fulfilled it perfectly. Jesus has loved you and has given Himself for you. Therefore, you too, ought to be able to show kindness in your attitude, your words, and your actions.