

What Does the Bible Say About Kindness?

Kindness is often treated as a small thing, a pleasant manner or simple niceness that costs nothing and means little. The Bible treats it as something far weightier. Kindness is part of the character of God, a fruit of His Spirit in His people, and one of the plainest ways the world can see Christ in us. Let us learn what the Scriptures mean by it.

God's Kindness to Us

We learn kindness by first receiving it. Paul wrote that *"the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared"*, and that He saved us, not for our works, but according to His mercy ([Titus 3:4-5](#)). God means to show throughout eternity *"the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"* ([Ephesians 2:7](#)). And His kindness is not reserved for the deserving, for Jesus said He *"is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil"* ([Luke 6:35](#)). We are alive to God only because He was kind to people who had given Him no reason to be.

Kindness Is Part of Christian Character

Because we have received such kindness, it is to mark us. It stands in the fruit of the Spirit ([Galatians 5:22](#)), and Paul told the church to *"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering"* ([Colossians 3:12](#)). Peter listed it among the graces to be added to faith, *"brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity"* ([2 Peter 1:7](#)). Kindness is not an optional sweetness for those born with a gentle temper. It is a garment every Christian is told to put on.

Be Kind to One Another

Kindness is love with its sleeves rolled up, love doing the small daily things. *"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"* ([Ephesians 4:32](#)). When Paul described what love looks like, the second thing he said was that *"charity... is kind"* ([1 Corinthians 13:4](#)). A kind word to the discouraged, a helping hand to the weary, a gentle answer to the sharp, these are not nothing. They are love made visible, and they are the work of every day.

Kind Even to Enemies

The kindness Christ calls for reaches past our friends. He said to *"love your enemies, and do good"* ([Luke 6:35](#)), and Paul wrote, *"if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink"* ([Romans 12:20](#)). This is the kindness that most looks like God, who is kind to the unthankful and the evil. Anyone can be pleasant to those who are pleasant in return. To return good for evil, and kindness for spite, is something only the grace of God can teach a heart to do.

Kindness Is Not Weakness

We should not mistake kindness for weakness, or for telling people only what they want to hear. Real kindness wants what is truly good for a person, and sometimes the kindest thing is a hard truth spoken gently. Paul wrote of *"speaking the truth in love"* ([Ephesians 4:15](#)), joining the two so they are never torn apart. *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful"* ([Proverbs 27:6](#)), Solomon said. Jesus was perfectly kind, and He never once flattered anyone. Kindness is not the absence of conviction. It is conviction carried with a gentle hand.

Kindness in Our Words

Much of our kindness, or the lack of it, comes out in how we speak. The good woman of Proverbs is praised because *"in her tongue is the law of kindness"* ([Proverbs 31:26](#)). Solomon observed that *"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger"* ([Proverbs 15:1](#)). Paul charged, *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying"* ([Ephesians 4:29](#)). So let kindness shape both your hands and your tongue. Show the world, in the way you treat people and the way you speak to them, the same kindness God showed you when you deserved none.

Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.