

Kindness is tender concern for others. It is the desire of a believer to treat others gently, just as the Lord treats him. It is the grace that fills our being softening all within us that would be harsh. It is a tender heart and a NURTURING spirit.

Many of us know far more of God's almighty power and JUDGMENT than we do of His tenderness. God was a Father who knew the INTENSE pain of intense love. Let's look at the following Scriptures.

Matthew 3:17 "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

John 17:24 "You loved me before the creation of the world."

Mark 14:36 "Abba Father...Take this cup from me. "

If you are a parent, you have experienced fear, pain, and perhaps being rejected, as well as deep love. God understands how you feel if you have a child:

- \* who is rejected by others his own age
- \* who is not beautiful to look upon
- \* who has been betrayed by friends
- \* who has begged you to fix something you could not fix
- \* who is suffering, dying or have buried a child.

GOD HAS BEEN THERE ! Jeremiah 9:24 tells us "let him who boasts boast about this; that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight" declares the Lord.

Have you ever felt forgotten by God? Let's read Isaiah 49:14-16.

(v15) Who will forget *her* child before God will forget His?

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(v16) How do we know God will *never* forget His children?

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We know for certain a nursing mother will forget her child *before* God will forget His own, because their names are forever written in the tender palm of His hand. As a mother many times you have quieted a fearful or fretting child. Rocking them and whispering in their ear "It's OK Mommy's here". Perhaps you sang a song as they begin to rest in your arms. God does that for us. God quiets us with His love.

Let's read Zephaniah 3:14-17 and fill in the blanks from verse 17. "The Lord your God is \_\_\_\_\_ you, he is \_\_\_\_\_ to save. He will take great \_\_\_\_\_ in you, he will \_\_\_\_\_ you with his \_\_\_\_\_, he will \_\_\_\_\_ over you with \_\_\_\_\_."

Do you allow God to nurture you? Do you take your fears and fretting to Him and allow Him to hold you in His arms and cover you with His love? I want to share with you the story of a boy named Michael.

We must learn to let God love us as His children. To let Him soothe our feelings when we hurt, our fears when we are scared, and our hearts when they are bleeding. We must come to know Christ as a nurturing Father, as well as a Sovereign Judge. Let's look once again at the tender heart of the Father.

Hosea 11:4 tells how God leads us. "I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love." The nurturing of God is our healing. He takes great delight in caring for you. John 3:1 tells us how much our heavenly Father loves us. "How great is the love the Father has LAVISHED on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

Let's turn from kindness and tenderness to goodness. Goodness is when we are energized with BENEVOLENCE, what we'll call *active* good. Doing something for the good or well-being of others. Let's turn in our Bible's to 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

- \* There are different kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ but the same \_\_\_\_\_,
- \* There are different kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ but the same \_\_\_\_\_,
- \* There are different kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ but the same \_\_\_\_\_
- \* who works \_\_\_\_\_ of them in \_\_\_\_\_ men.
- \* They are to be used for the \_\_\_\_\_.
- \* All of these are the work of one and the same \_\_\_\_\_.
- \* He gives them to each one as he (Holy Spirit) \_\_\_\_\_.

God did not save us so we could look pretty coming to church on Sunday. No, indeed. God saved us and left us here because He has special work for each of us to do. He has a mission to accomplish for the kingdom in every generation. All of which was planned in advance for us to do.

We are called to do a lot of good or a little. How much good we do depends on our obedience.

Ephesians 2:10 "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do". We have not been saved *by* our works-- we have been saved *for* His works.

Let's turn in the New Testament to Titus 3:1-8. This is about "Doing What is Good" according to the Bible. This may or may not agree with our culture and the world around us.

It is important to understand that what is good, profitable or BENEFICIAL is not always fun, easy or pleasant. The purpose of this quality of the fruit of the Spirit is to do that which is most *beneficial*, even if it is not that which is most *popular*.

A great example of this is found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. "All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, REBUKING, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work".

What are the four ways the Word of God uses to prepare us for good works?

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_

Remember, love, joy, peace, patience and kindness come before goodness. There is an order to the fruit of the Spirit for a reason. We are to learn our lessons in an orderly way so that when it comes to actually doing the work God has for us to do, we will be prepared because we learned these earlier lessons well.



Memory Verse: Jeremiah 9:24 "but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight"

IS THERE A NEW DIRECTION TO TAKE? Have you prepared yourself as the Bible says we should? Learned the lessons of love, joy, peace, patience and kindness that you might do the good works the Lord has for you to do. If not, do you need God's direction?

#### WHAT DID GOD SHOW US TODAY?

- 1) Kindness is concern for others. To treat others as the Lord treats him. Jer. 9:24
- 2) God will never forget us. He wants to nurture and care for us. Isa. 49:14-16, Zep. 3:17
- 3) Goodness is doing something for the good of others. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11
- 4) We have not been saved *by* our works we have been saved *for* His works. Titus 3:1-8

How will you show kindness and goodness for the common good?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Request: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Word Study:

- 1) beneficial: helpful, favorable, useful, good for you and others. The help was beneficial.
- 2) intense: forceful, passionate, deep, powerful, strong feelings from within a person.  
The intense feelings of a strong love is what mothers have for their children.
- 3) judgment: knowledge, reason, understanding. God's judgment is based on Truth.
- 4) nurturing: feed, care for, educate, train, support, develop. She is a nurturing friend.
- 5) rebuking: to be critical of, blame, oppose, scold. He was rebuked for his bad behavior.
- 6) lavished: pamper, be generous, to give freely without limits. God lavished His love on us