

LIFE CHURCH OF NEW JERSEY

22 Laurence Parkway, Old Bridge, NJ

FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL

FRUIT SALAD SERIES — WEEK 5

Chrēstotēs — Be Kind, Please Rewind

The Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness

Galatians 5:22-23

Pastor Andrew Chung-Ying

How to Use This Devotional

Over the next five days, you'll walk through the fruit of kindness one layer at a time — from the kindness God has shown you, to the kindness He's growing in you, to the kindness He's calling you to give away. Each day includes a scripture to read, a short reflection, questions to search your heart, a practical step to take with you, and a closing prayer. Space is provided for you to write. Take your time — fruit doesn't ripen in a hurry.

Where We Are in the Harvest — Week 5

TOWARD GOD	TOWARD OTHERS	TOWARD SELF
✓ Agapē — Love ✓ Charā — Joy ✓ Eirēnē — Peace	✓ Makrothymia — Longsuffering ▶ Chrēstotēs — Kindness — THIS WEEK ○ Agathōsynē — Goodness	○ Pistis — Faith ○ Prautes — Meekness ○ Enkrateia — Temperance

DAY 1 The Kindness That Started It All

READ

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (Romans 2:4, KJV)

REFLECT

Before you ever showed anyone else kindness, God showed it to you. Not because you earned it — you didn't — but because that's who He is. His kindness wasn't a passive feeling toward you; it was the very thing that led you to repentance, to Him. Every fruit of the Spirit growing in your life today started with a seed of kindness God planted when He rewound what sin had worn out in you.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Where do I see God's kindness in my own story — in moments I didn't deserve grace but received it anyway?*
 - *Have I been treating God's kindness as something to take for granted, rather than something that leads to repentance?*
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TAKE IT WITH YOU

Write down one specific way God has been kind to you this past year. Thank Him for it out loud before you move on with your day.

PRAY

Father, thank You for Your kindness that reached me long before I ever reached for You. Help me never take it for granted. Let it lead me deeper into repentance and closer to You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 2 Kindness Reflected

READ

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32, KJV)

REFLECT

Notice the pattern in this verse: our kindness toward others is meant to mirror the kindness God has already shown us. We're not inventing a virtue from scratch — we're reflecting what's already been given. Tenderheartedness and forgiveness aren't optional add-ons to kindness; they're what kindness looks like when it meets someone who has actually hurt you.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Is there someone I'm struggling to be tenderhearted or forgiving toward right now?*
- *Am I withholding kindness from someone because I feel they haven't earned it — forgetting that I hadn't earned God's kindness either?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Identify one person you've been keeping your guard up against. Take one small step toward tenderheartedness with them this week — a text, a prayer, a released grudge.

PRAY

Lord, You forgave me completely through Christ. Soften my heart toward the people I've been guarding myself against. Let Your kindness flow through me to them, even when it's hard. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 3 Preferring Others

READ

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (Philippians 2:3-4, KJV)

REFLECT

Kindness has a purpose, and that purpose is other-centered living. Paul isn't describing a nice personality trait here — he's describing humility in action, the kind that notices someone else's interests and treats them as being just as important as your own. This is exactly the posture Christ took when He emptied Himself for us. Kindness is Christlikeness with its sleeves rolled up.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *In my daily relationships, whose interests do I default to protecting first — mine, or others'?*
- *What would it look like this week to genuinely esteem someone else as better than myself?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Choose one interaction today where you intentionally put someone else's convenience ahead of your own — in traffic, at work, at home. Notice how it feels to do it quietly, without announcing it.

PRAY

Jesus, You emptied Yourself for people who could never repay You. Teach me to esteem others the way You esteemed me — not from obligation, but from love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 4 Fruit, Not Effort

READ

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:5, KJV)

REFLECT

You cannot grit your teeth and manufacture kindness that lasts. It's fruit, and fruit grows out of connection to the vine, not out of willpower. If you've been exhausting yourself trying to “be kinder” through sheer effort, this is your invitation to stop striving and start abiding. Kindness that flows from the Spirit doesn't run dry the way kindness forced from self-effort does.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Have I been trying to produce kindness in my own strength, apart from abiding in Christ?*
- *What does abiding — staying connected to the Vine — practically look like in my daily rhythm?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Set aside ten unhurried minutes today just to abide — no requests, no agenda, just sitting in God's presence. Ask the Spirit to produce kindness in you as fruit, not effort.

PRAY

Holy Spirit, I don't want to fake kindness anymore — I want it to be real fruit that grows from staying close to You. Teach me to abide. Produce in me what I cannot manufacture on my own. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 5 Leave It Better Than You Found It

READ

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23, KJV)

REFLECT

The old Blockbuster sticker said, “Be Kind, Please Rewind” — a small, unenforced request to leave things ready for the next person. That's the heartbeat of this whole week: kindness is what you leave behind for someone you may never see again. Christ rewound your life completely at the cross, at His own cost, so you could receive it new. Now He asks you to do the same for others — quietly, faithfully, one small act at a time.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Looking back over this week, where has God grown kindness in me the most?*
- *Who is the “next renter” in my life this week — someone who will receive whatever I leave behind?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Do one act of kindness this week that no one will ever trace back to you. Let it be between you and God alone.

PRAY

Father, thank You for growing this fruit in me this week. Let me leave every person, every room, every relationship a little better than I found it — not for credit, but because Your Spirit lives in me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Digging Deeper: Kindness as Our Witness

This week's sermon went further into where kindness comes from and what it does in the world. A few things worth sitting with on your own this week:

Gentleness or Kindness?

The Greek word behind Galatians 5:22 is *chrēstotēs*. The KJV translates it three different ways depending on context — “goodness” (Romans 2:4; Romans 11:22), “kindness” (Ephesians 2:7; Colossians 3:12; Titus 3:4-5), and “gentleness” (Galatians 5:22). In 1611 English, “gentle” described noble, gracious goodness in action — not a soft-spoken personality. That's why modern translations render it “kindness” across the board.

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; (Titus 3:4-5, KJV)

Jesus Met the Need, Then Witnessed

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. (Matthew 14:14, KJV)

There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. (John 6:9-13, KJV)

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (Luke 10:33-35, KJV)

Overcoming What You Never Received

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21, KJV)

If kindness was never modeled for you, that does not disqualify you from it. It is fruit of the Spirit, not a family trait — God plants it fresh in you regardless of what you did or didn't receive growing up.

We Are His Hands and His Feet

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12, KJV)

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Matthew 25:40, KJV)

Nobody has seen God. But people see you. Every act of kindness is His love finishing its journey through your hands into someone else's story.

Capstone Assessment: Five Weeks in Review

Take a few quiet minutes to look back — not just over this week, but over all five weeks of Fruit Salad so far.

- *Which day's scripture challenged me the most this week, and why?*
- *Where did I actually put kindness into action this week — even in something small?*
- *Of the five fruits we've tasted so far — love, joy, peace, longsuffering, and kindness — which is growing the slowest in me right now?*
- *What is one way I sensed the Holy Spirit producing this fruit in me, rather than me forcing it?*

A CLOSING WORD

Fruit is grown, not manufactured. If this week felt more like striving than growing, don't be discouraged — go back to Day 4 and abide. The Spirit who began this good work in you is faithful to finish it (Philippians 1:6). Be kind. Please rewind.