



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – July 27, 2025

To Know Christ...

The fruit of the Spirit is ... Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, and the next aspect of this spiritual fruit is Kindness. (Galatians 5:22) If you *only* think of this as showing mere gestures of courtesy or polite etiquette, you will be missing the major function and purpose of genuine spiritual kindness. This classification of kindness pertains to how you treat your adversary. It will require utilizing humility, self-sacrificing love, and patience. This Kindness is about treating your enemy in a godly way during or after they are sinning against you. Showing love while being hated. Speaking with grace while being ridiculed or mocked. Motives born out of what is best for your opponent's soul while they try to torture yours. Jesus said it this way, **"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."** (Luke 6:35-36) Hatred from our enemies must be met with a fierce kindness born out of the love of Christ from the deepest recesses of our hearts! For He HIMSELF is KIND to ungrateful and evil men. We must be full of mercy, not bitterness or vengeance. This is how the Lord treated us while we were formerly His enemies, the walking dead in the old self. Why did we change?

Self-sacrificing love must be the motive for kindness to be deeply rooted within us. **"Love is patient, Love is Kind."** (1 Corinthians 13:4a) It is amazing how patience and kindness are the foundational building blocks of Christ-like Love! Since patience requires an understanding of the process, kindness is the interaction style of Christ-like Love with the enemy. But why? In order for souls and hearts to change! The kindness of loving our enemies is what engages the process of change from hatred to love inside of them. Do you know how impactful the kindness of love is on the enemies of God? It changed you and me, did it not? (See Romans 2:4) Isn't HIS kindness what drove us to draw near to Jesus and put on the new self? Was it not His self-sacrificing love that motivates our faithful obedience? Want to impact your neighbors who are enemies of God to transform? Treat them godly when they ridicule or look down on you. Godly

behavior while under the attacks of the enemy is the sharp scalpel of kindness. It cuts to the heart and soul. Use it wisely and often; it is the power of God working within us.

Aim at PERFECTION. Jesus said it, but do we believe it? **“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”** (Matthew 5:46-48) Kindness is not a quaint suggestion; it is the way of love. Kindness includes the love of gently, yet firmly, confronting situations when evil is being exemplified by our enemies. If we only love those who love us, we are not walking by the Spirit. If we only say hello to our friends or family, how will we reach the lost souls who need Jesus as desperately as we do? We won’t. But if we start loving those who hate us, and being kind to the evil and ungrateful, refusing to be partial, we will be Perfect as our Heavenly Father is. That is the kindness that Jesus perfectly lived. Are you kind to your friends as well as your enemies? Jesus said it while He was living it. “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) Go and do the same.

- Carey Terry