

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM:

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Kindness: Luke 10:25-37

August 9, 2020

WORSHIP

Take a moment to remind yourself why you are still meeting together during quarantine: *To grow as disciples of Jesus by cultivating our relationship with God and friendship with others.*

Listen to a song of worship: [See the Day - Liz Vice](#) or [King of Kings - Hillsong](#)

Or read the following together:

This is what the Lord says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord. Jeremiah 9:23-24

INTRODUCTION

The fruit of kindness can be defined as *love in action*, especially acts of love toward those who are different from ourselves. Kindness manifests the character of Christ toward those experiencing disadvantages socially, economically and physically.

Who are the specific people and where are the specific places Christians are sent to demonstrate kindness? Jesus tells us clearly—to our neighbor. He then goes on to describe who our neighbor is and the quality of love to be shown to our neighbor. The word "neighbor" means the person who is "nigh" or near you. Neighbors are people outside of your family, whom you regularly see face to face due to proximity. *A neighbor is someone near you but not just like you—near, yet different.*

Once we open our eyes to the identity of our "neighbor," how then are we to be in relationships of kindness with them? Jesus answers this question with a story about a Samaritan who opens his life to a neighbor in need, a story that demonstrates the comprehensive, lavish, holistic kindness of God.

SCRIPTURE

20 MINUTES

Read the following Scriptures. Then respond using the questions below.

Luke 10:25-37, New International Version (NIV)

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

²⁷ He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

- ▶ How does Jesus describe love in action (kindness) in this passage?
- ▶ Both the priest and the Levite had to remain ceremonially clean in order to perform religious rites for their community, so they passed by the desperate man. Although they sought to keep the law, they rejected the command to love their neighbor. They may have thought “I cannot be kind, but someone else really should.” How does the same thing happen today? Be as specific and practical as you can.
- ▶ Read the quote below. Summarize, and then discuss. How could knowing Jesus empower us to practice kindness and build relationships, especially across differences (ethnic, socioeconomic, age) with our neighbors?

Jesus...was asking each listener [who were all Jews] to imagine himself to be a victim of violence, dying, with no hope if this [despised] Samaritan did not stop and help...Jesus was saying something like this: “What if your only hope was to get ministry from someone who not only did not owe you any help—but who actually owed you the opposite? What if your only hope was to get free grace from someone who had every justification, based on your relationship to him, to trample you?...Jesus is the Great Samaritan to whom the Good Samaritan points...Once we receive this ultimate, radical neighbor love through Jesus, we can start to be the neighbors that the Bible calls us to be.

—Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes Us Just*

- ▶ What implications will you carry into your life from this conversation? How can we pray for and hold each other accountable?

GOING FURTHER THIS WEEK

Use the [Fruit of the Spirit devotional guide](#) to grow in bearing the fruit of kindness.

- ▶ Ask God to show you where to act in kindness and build relationships across differences.
- ▶ Use the prayer below to pray for Spirit-filled kindness to pervade our actions, our city, neighborhoods, workplaces and relationships.

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then with the Scripture discussion in mind, pray for each other and the particular needs in our city and world.

- ▶ Want to continue meditating on Scripture throughout the week? Join Virtual Noonday prayer:
eastside.redeemer.com/prayer

