

KINDNESS

*God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other,
just as Christ forgave you.*

Ephesians 2:6-7 & 4:32

I believe that in every person's spiritual makeup is a nature to be kind. We are created in the image of God and God is kind. This kind-nature may be latent because of hurts and abuses in some and others may act in violence because of a radical upbringing, but how is it that the harshest person can be kind to a pet? There is something in all of us that wants to be kind and it is really enlivened when we come to know Jesus in a personal way.

I remember a friend saying that he felt so different toward people when he gave his life to Christ. That is because Jesus reveals our true spiritual nature and heals our wounds so that we can be like him.

In bible language, kindness takes on three characteristics: humility, mercy and well doing. Humility is a result of God's kindness. We could not save ourselves. We could not pay the price for spiritual salvation and we could not be good enough to be counted as holy. Holy means being spiritually perfect. Jesus did what we could not do. He paid the price. How humbling to admit that we have fallen short! But that is the beginning of new life for us. When we humble ourselves and accept the free gift of forgiveness which leads to salvation from eternal punishment, we become alive spiritually. Look around you today and see people as they really are, lives in need of a Savior. In the verses above, gain understanding on how kind God has been to you. Your knowledge will lead you to be the same...forgiving just as Christ forgave you. It takes humility to receive forgiveness and to give forgiveness.

Mercy has to do with love. In the Old Testament loving-kindness and mercy are the same. When God has penetrated your heart with his love you are compelled to love others (see II Corinthians 5: 14-15). Love is a compelling emotion that will not leave you alone. It will gnaw at your conscience until you respond to it. Love seeks manifestation. In other words, love must be shown. Read I Corinthians 13 and Romans 12 and look at the ways love expresses itself. Love will take on a life of its own if you will let it. Don't stop kindness expressing itself through love. It is fulfilling!

Well doing or doing good deeds is how kindness is spread. God is good and so are transformed people. The desire to see ways to do good for others is in you. All you have to do is look. The Lord will help you. Paul writes, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2-10). Good deeds range from doing small favors, like opening a door for someone, to helping someone financially. One man told me recently that the Lord has been really stretching him by prompting him to give to the needs of others. Listen to those inner "hits" of the Holy Spirit. God is moving you because he is moved by kindness. Be like your heavenly Father today. Be kind to someone just as He has been kind to you.