



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

KINDNESS

Family Study Guides

FRUIT OF GOD'S SPIRIT
"Kindness"
Family Study Guide

Objectives:

- Discuss that treating others with kindness is God's way and is what He wants us to do.
- Show that if you sow kindness you will reap kindness in return.
- Help your family describe how Christ showed kindness.
- Review the examples of kindness shown to the Prophet Elijah.
- Understand the lesson of the Good Samaritan and how it applies today.

Definition: Kindness is treating all people as our neighbors, even people we may not like. It is helping others and showing love to everyone, doing acts of compassion and outgoing concern for another person who has a need.

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

1 Corinthians 13:4 *Love suffers long and is kind, it is not proud, it is not rude...always protects...*

Memory Verse:

Psalms 117:2a *For His merciful kindness is great toward us...*

Christ's Example in Matthew 15:32-39 – He feeds the multitude of people

When Jesus was here on earth, He did many acts of kindness. One example is found in Matthew 15.

Jesus had been preaching to the people and healing many. Everywhere He went, large crowds followed him. While He was in the wilderness, He said to His disciples, *"I feel so sorry for this multitude, because they have followed me for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry as they may faint on the way."*

His disciples responded, *"Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to feed such a huge crowd?"* Jesus then asked them how many loaves they had. The only food available was seven loaves of bread and a couple of fish.

- ✓ What would you have thought about feeding 4,000 people with this little amount of food? How big a piece of bread do you think you would have gotten?
- ✓ Does the Bible show if anyone told Jesus that they had a physical need for food or asked him for food?
- ✓ How was Jesus aware of that need? How is God aware of our physical needs?
- ✓ Do you think Jesus knew everyone in this crowd? What does that show us about extending kindness to others?

Jesus then commanded the people to sit on the ground. He took the loaves and the fish and gave a blessing. Next, He divided the bread and the fish into pieces and gave them to His disciples. The disciples started passing out the bread and fish. Everyone kept taking food from the baskets until all 4,000 people were full—and there were seven baskets of food left over!

- ✓ What does this example show us about godly kindness?
[Kindness is being aware of the needs of others, then giving, sharing and caring for and helping others. It is willingness to serve others and having compassion for them.]
- ✓ From this and other examples, what characteristics did Jesus have that made Him a kind person?
[He lived the fruit of kindness by showing His concern for and doing something for those in need. He was respectful and compassionate to all types of people, not just His friends.]
- ✓ Before this miracle, Jesus prayed to the Father and gave thanks. Why do you think this was important to do?
- ✓ In another instance in John 6:1-14, Jesus fed five thousand people using the bread and fish of a young boy. How does God use our kind acts to do even bigger things than we can imagine? Share any stories you may have as a family.

What are some things we can do in our lives from this example set by Jesus?

Suggestions:

- Have your family help serve food in a homeless shelter.
- Discuss with your family how you can be kind during church potluck meals.
(Children—allow older people to go through the line first. Be aware of how much food is available—and take less if necessary so others will have enough.)
- For younger children: Brainstorm the small ways you can show kindness each day—opening a door for someone, getting your parent or grandparent a glass of water or lemonade, letting someone take a turn first, picking up something that someone dropped, helping someone carry items to their car.

Old Testament Example: Elijah (1 Kings 17:1-16)

Read or tell the story of the Prophet Elijah and two examples of kindness:

- Elijah was miraculously fed by the ravens.
- Elijah was fed by a widow whose flour and oil never ran out because of God's kind miracles.

What is a prophet? A prophet person inspired by God to tell people His will. Often times the message was about what would happen to people if they obeyed—or disobeyed God. People did not always like what they heard from the prophet.

Read/tell about the prophet Elijah in **1 Kings 17:1-6**. Elijah gave a warning about a long drought without rain. Then, God told Elijah to hide by a brook.

- ✓ Who was being kind to Elijah and how was he doing it? [God, by sending a raven with food.]
- ✓ Discuss other ways God shows His kindness through miracles. [Jesus feeding the 4,000? Healing? Other answered prayers?]

Continue the story in **1 Kings 17:7-16**. There was no rain and the crops were not growing, so there was little food. So put yourself in the place of this widow:

1 Kings 17:10-11 (NCV) *Elijah asked her, "Would you bring me a little water in a cup so I may have a drink?" As she was going to get his water, Elijah said, "Please bring me a piece of bread, too."*

She was being kind to bring him some water—but now Elijah asks for more! Her generosity was being put to a test. She explained the situation.

1 Kings 17:12 *The woman answered, "As surely as the LORD your God lives, I have no bread. I have only a handful of flour in a jar and only a little olive oil in a jug. I came here to gather some wood so I could go home and cook our last meal. My son and I will eat it and then die from hunger."*

What would you have done? It certainly appears that she needed the help of God's Spirit so she could do acts of kindness that "humanly" did not "make sense" to do. Often times it is "inconvenient" to show kindness to others

Elijah told her that if she went ahead and gave him the bread and water—that God would provide daily bread for her family.

✓ In what ways was this event similar to Jesus and the "loaves and fishes?"

This was a test of her willingness to trust God—and be kind to His servant Elijah. Sometimes doing the right thing is not easy or convenient (note "Good Samaritan" story below). It does not always bring an immediate blessing to ourselves.

How is the story of Elijah and the widow similar to the principle of giving God His tithes?

Malachi 3:10 (ESV) *Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.*

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Sharing is being kind. How else can you be kind? [Share toys, do chores, help an older person, a brother or sister.]

BONUS DISCUSSION:

Let's go into the story a bit further. A while after the widow was blessed for her kindness—both she and Elijah were tempted to doubt God's blessings. Notice:

1 Kings 17:17-20 (NCV) *Sometime later the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. He grew worse and worse and finally stopped breathing. The woman said to Elijah, "Man of God, what have you done to me? Did you come here to remind me of my sin and to kill my son?" Elijah said to her, "Give me your son." Elijah took the boy from her, carried him upstairs, and laid him on the bed in the room where he was staying. Then he prayed to the LORD: "LORD my God, this widow is letting me stay in her house. Why have you done this terrible thing to her and caused her son to die?"*

Both of them were wondering why they were not blessed after having been so faithful.

- ✓ Do you think the widow may have at least been tempted to stop making Elijah's meals?
- ✓ Are you ever tempted to doubt God because bad things have happened to you or those you love?
- ✓ Should our kindness to others only be based on how much we get in return?

These true stories are in the Bible to help us build our faith in God and realize that He will always cause the right thing to happen in our lives even though we do not understand it at the time.

Read the rest of this account in **1 Kings 17:21-24**.

- ✓ How did the Lord show kindness and compassion in this situation? What did the widow learn through this experience? (Read what she says in verse 24.)

The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:30-36 - Do we help or “pass by on the other side?”

The story of the Good Samaritan begins this way:

Luke 10:25 (NET) *Now an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

Luke 10:27 When Jesus asked him what he thought, the man answered, *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."*

In a desire to limit those he would have to be kind to, the man asked Jesus, *"But who is my neighbor?"*

[To the Jews, neither Gentiles nor Samaritans would be viewed as a “neighbor.” The Pharisees even disdained those Hebrews not of their sect. The term “neighbor” embraced a very narrow circle with many in those days.]

Jesus answered his question by having him consider the following story:

As a family read and discuss Luke 10:25-37.

A (probably Jewish) man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho when he got hurt by some robbers. The robbers took everything the man had and beat him up. Then they went away, leaving him hurt and almost dead. Notice what happened next:

Luke 10:31-32 *Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.*

These men were very important and busy, probably with “church work.” It was not “convenient” for them to be kind to the man. So, they saw his needs, but then “*passed by on the other side*” instead of helping him.

- ✓ Have you ever seen someone who had a need, or saw something that needed to be done—and instead of helping—you “*passed by on the other side*?”

What are some ways we could do that?

- If you were on your way to church, and a woman and her child had a legitimate need
 - Would you stop and help, even if it meant being late to church services?
 - Or “pass by on the other side” and move on so you are not late for services?
 - Have you ever seen trash on the sidewalk—and ignored it? Or did you do the kind thing and throw the ugly trash away?
- ✓ What are other ways we can “*pass by on the other side*” instead of help?

Let’s continue the story:

But then a Samaritan man came to where the man was. The Samaritan saw that the man was Jewish and that generally, *“Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans” (John 4:9 [NLT]).*

But the Samaritan stopped to help. He bandaged the hurt man’s sores and put the man on his own donkey. The Samaritan took him to an inn. He even paid the innkeeper to take care of the hurt man!

After telling the story Jesus summarized to the man, and to each of us:

Luke 10:36-37 (GNT) *Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a*

neighbor toward the man attacked by the robbers?" The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him." Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."

What do these verses tell us about who we should be kind to?

- **Proverbs 25:21** *If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.*
- **Mark 9:41 (GNT)** *I assure you that anyone who gives you a drink of water because you belong to me will certainly receive a reward.*

What do you think God wants each of us to learn from this story?

BONUS DISCUSSION:

- ✓ **Does showing respect for and being kind to everyone mean that we should always give everyone everything they would like to have?**
- ✓ **Can we or should we ever use judgment to determine how to best show kindness to others?**
 - Is it kind to give kids scholarships to UYCamps? Should every kid then get a scholarship? Discuss some reasons you think the Pastor might decide not to approve a scholarship.
 - Is it kind to give a homeless person money or food if they ask for it? What if you knew that person would spend the money for drugs? Would it be kind to enable their bad actions?
 - Would it be unkind to take a child away from his parents? What if the child is suffering from abuse? Would it be more kind to leave them in a bad situation, or get them into a loving foster home?
- ✓ What else does this scripture tell us about how and when to “be kind” to people? How can we apply this principle as we seek to be truly kind to others?
2 Thessalonians 3:10-13 (NCV) ... *"Anyone who refuses to work should not eat." We hear that some people in your group refuse to work. They do nothing but busy themselves in other people's lives. We command those people and beg them in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and earn their own food. But you, brothers and sisters, never become tired of doing good.*

IMPORTANT FAMILY ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION!

We are plainly told: *“Be kind and compassionate to one another” (Ephesians 4:32 [NIV])*. But do we sometimes fail to do so in the Church of God? There have been times in the church—in the past and present—that we have not shown proper godly kindness to others in the congregation.

Paul had to correct the Corinthian congregation:

1 Corinthians 11:17-18 (GNT) *In the following instructions, however, I do not praise you, because your meetings for worship actually do more harm than good. In the first place, I have been told that there are opposing groups in your meetings; and this I believe is partly true*

James also had to address the issue of lack of love and kindness in the congregation:

James 2:1-4 (NCV) *My dear brothers and sisters, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, never think some people are more important than others. Suppose someone comes into your church meeting wearing nice clothes and a gold ring. At the same time a poor person comes in wearing old, dirty clothes. You show special attention to the one wearing nice clothes and say, "Please, sit here in*

this good seat." But you say to the poor person, "Stand over there," or, "Sit on the floor by my feet." What are you doing? You are making some people more important than others, and with evil thoughts you are deciding that one person is better.

While we repel at the thought that members would mis-treat one another in this way—is it possible that we are unkind to others when we gather at Sabbath services? Could we be showing lack of kindness to people? Could we be making people feel unloved and unwanted?

Think of any given Sabbath. Who did you talk to before and after services? Was it the usual group of friends or relatives? Was it the mainly the people you have the most in common with? Did you walk by and ignore a member or two and “walk by on the other side” to be with your friends? Like the Levite and priest, were you “too busy” doing your job to reach out and show kindness to people?

Was there a new family and did you go meet them? Did you have your children go and talk with their children? Or did they avoid and ignore them? Did you notice a visitor in the midst—and did you approach and welcome them? Was there a person you did not recognize—and still have no idea who they are or why they were there?

Did you reach out to someone who seemed “down” or withdrawn? Did you notice—and give your time to someone who looked like they needed a friend, or for someone to care?

Do people visit your congregation and tell others, “That is such a friendly congregation, I look forward to going back!” Or do people go away looking for a place that truly displays the love of God?

As a family discuss how you can please God and make a difference by showing kindness to others each Sabbath! Have each family member think about how they can reach out to others in need, to cross generational divides, to include others in conversations. After each Sabbath, have each member of your family discuss who they talked with, what they did for someone else. Did you meet someone new? What do you know about them? Discuss how you can get to know and include others in activities other than Sabbath services.

Remember Jesus admonition in **Luke 10:36-37** ... *"In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbor toward the man attacked by the robbers?" The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him." Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."*

Possible Family Discussions or Activities

- Discuss some of the facets of kindness from the Parable of the Good Samaritan: giving, helping the injured; carrying someone’s load; feeding the hungry; protecting someone; blessing others; being hospitable; and touching.
- Ask your child how they can be kind to others and do acts of kindness during the week.
- Brainstorm together, possible ways that your family can do kind deeds for others. Ideas might include the following:
 - Mow a lawn or do other yard work for an elderly person.
 - Take flowers to someone who is going through a difficult time.
 - Make a special meal or dessert for someone in need.
 - Send a note of thanks to someone who serves at church.

- Send get well cards to people who are sick or injured.
- Volunteer to help put away chairs or other tasks after church services.
- **James 1:27** *"Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."*
How are kindness and goodness related? Can you have one without the other?
- Talk about how God can help us to find ways to be kind. As a family, pray at the beginning of the day for God to show you how He would like you to be a light or show kindness.

Additional Resources that you can use in your family studies:

- **Fruits of the Spirit: Kindness** sermon by Gary Petty. <https://www.ucg.org/sermons/fruits-of-the-spirit-part-5-kindness>
- **Follow Me "Inasmuch!"** by Mr. Robin Webber
<https://www.ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-magazine/follow-me-inasmuch>
- Have family or class watch the [Kindness Boomerang](#) video. Discuss:
 - ✓ What do you think the creators of this video are trying to say?
 - ✓ Do you think that these random acts of kindness actually have this type of effect on other people?
 - ✓ Have you ever had someone be kind to you like this? What? How did it feel? Did you feel like doing something nice for another person as a result?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=nwAYpLVyeFU
- Use [Science of Kindness](#) video to have a discussion on what the Creator God built into humans. Kindness is even a physiological law that works when followed.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FA1ggXovaxU>
- **Suggestions for practical Kindness Activities:** *Pennies of Time* penniesoftime.com

Possible Classroom Activities

1. **Discuss God’s Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness**—another attribute of God’s love.
What are some of the things you can do every day to be kind? (Possible answers/starter ideas: Give a soft answer, be hospitable, show appreciation, put a smile on your face, be gentle, forgive others for their mistakes, touch someone’s hand, talk to new kids at church.)
How can we be sure we are being kind? (The answer is to turn the situation around and put yourself in the other person’s shoes. Ask yourself, “How would I like to be treated?”)
2. Discuss how to get to know and include others in activities at Sabbath services and other times. Practice meeting a new kid at church.
3. Ask each child to give an example of how they can demonstrate kindness in their lives.
4. **Journal:** Copy the word “kindness” and a synonym along with the memory verse.
5. If you are using a visual, building the **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT tree**, devote some time for the children to cut, color and attach the fruit goodness and kindness on their tree.
6. **“Kindness Project:”** Choose some members in the congregation who would benefit from acts of kindness—maybe a widow or grandparent. Have each student choose one and challenge them to “make their day” each Sabbath for a month through acts of kindness.
7. **Volunteer Challenge:** Encourage students to volunteer together or individually sometime in the course of the month. Then, when you come back together, discuss the experience. What was the need? Was it a one-time act of kindness needed or could it be on-going? What about the experience was challenging? What was rewarding? What did you learn from the experience?
8. Complete the **BIBLICAL KIND DEEDS Worksheet** (on next page)
9. **Case Study:** Have each student study a different example of kindness from Jesus Christ in the gospels. What can we learn from Christ’s example that we can apply this next week?
10. **Kindness Scenarios:** After talking about the parable of the Good Samaritan, divide students into groups. Have them create their own scenario where an act of kindness could be extended. Encourage them to be real—no fake or surface scenarios—make it something that would really happen. Have them act out what it would look like if kindness was not in the picture. Then, have them “replay” the scenario where kindness is extended. What can we learn from these scenarios? What does it take to be kind?

BIBLICAL KIND DEEDS Worksheet

The Bible has many examples of kindness. Fill in each blank with the deed of kindness described in the scripture that follows.

1. Abraham let Lot have first choice of _____ (**Genesis 13:8-12**).
2. Jesus was presented _____, _____ and _____ by the wise men (**Matthew 2:1-11**).
3. The good Samaritan helped a man who was robbed, by _____ his wounds (**Luke 10:30-37**).
4. Jesus praised a widow because she gave _____ (**Luke 21:1-4**).
5. Simon, a Cyrenian, carried Jesus' _____ (**Luke 23:26**).
6. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with _____ (**John 12:3**).
7. Boaz rewarded Ruth because of her kindness to her _____ (**Ruth 2:5-11**).
8. David allowed Mephibosheth to _____ for Jonathan's sake (**2 Samuel 9:6-7**).
9. Rahab aided the spies by letting them down _____ through a window (**Joshua 2:1-15**).
10. Jonathan gave David a _____, _____, _____ and _____ (**1 Samuel 18:4**).
11. Dorcas made _____ and _____ for widows (**Acts 9:39**).
12. Jesus took the children in His arms and put His _____ on them and He _____ them (**Mark 10:13-16**).

BIBLICAL KIND DEEDS Worksheet (Answers)

1. Abraham let Lot have first choice of all the Jordan Valley (Genesis 13:8-12).
2. Jesus was presented gold, frankincense and myrrh by the wise men (Matthew 2:1-11).
3. The good Samaritan helped a man who was robbed by dressing or binding up his wounds (Luke 10:30-37).
4. Jesus praised a widow because she gave all that she had (Luke 21:1-4).
5. Simon, a Cyrenian, carried Jesus' stake, post or cross (Luke 23:26).
6. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with ointment (John 12:3).
7. Boaz rewarded Ruth because of her kindness to her mother-in-law (Ruth 2:5-11).
8. David allowed Mephibosheth to eat at his table for Jonathan's sake (2 Samuel 9:6-7).
9. Rahab aided the spies by letting them down by a rope through a window (Joshua 2:1-15).
10. Jonathan gave David a robe, sword, bow and his belt (1 Samuel 18:4).
11. Dorcas made coats and garments for widows (Acts 9:39).
12. Jesus took the children in His arms and He blessed them (Mark 10:13-16).

THE GOOD SAMARITAN LUKE 10:25-37

