



# The Harvest

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## The Kindness Club

The fruit of the spirit “kindness” is rarely referred to in the Bible with descriptions. For example, with “love,” *1 Corinthians 13:4-8* goes into detail about what love is and how it is supposed to look when acted upon. Because the Bible is not crystal clear in describing kindness as an attribute, we have to look a little deeper.

*“Get rid of all bitterness and rage  
and anger and quarreling and slander,  
along with all malice. Instead,  
be kind to one another,  
compassionate, forgiving each other just as  
God in Messiah also forgave you.”  
~ Ephesians 4:31-32 ~*

“Kindness” is an extremely vague term because the English language does not have a word that encompasses all of its attributes. Based on stories in Scripture that reference the idea of kindness, we see that acts of kindness meet physical and spiritual needs in a way that honors God. Kindness combines the ideas of mercy, grace, compassion, and forgiveness. In terms of mercy, kindness requires not punishing individuals for what their actions may deserve. In terms of grace, kindness gives blessing where blessing was not warranted. In terms of compassion, kindness acts out of sympathy for another in attempting to give a measure of goodness to them. In terms of forgiveness, kindness removes the debt of another and requires no retribution for actions.

One example of kindness is in *Joshua 2* (specifically *verses 8-14*). Rahab and her family harbored Joshua’s spies, and in return, the spies promised to spare their family – in this example, kindness is given in return for someone else’s kindness. Now, it doesn’t always happen this way. For instance, in the well-known story of the Good Samaritan (*read Luke 10:25-37*), the Samaritan showed completely sacrificial kindness. He saw the man who had been beaten and had compassion on him. Compassion compels action on the behalf of another. These are acts of kindness done for the benefit of those around us.

The modern, secular definition of kindness is “the act of being sympathetic or helpful in nature.” We see this modeled in the stories we just read and all throughout Scripture. Sometimes, we see the words “love” and “kindness” used interchangeably in different translations throughout the Bible which implies its sacrificial, not-self-serving nature.

Pause: What is one way you’ve shown kindness to someone recently?

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