

Mom2Mom 1.31.24
The Fruit of the Spirit
Kindness and Goodness TEACHING
TEACHER Notes

((Teacher, please prepare for this class by rereading Chapter 8 of the book "The Fruitful Life" by Jerry Bridges. This will allow you to elaborate on points of the lesson below as you are led by the Holy Spirit.))

I. ((click)) Kindness – What it is - (10 minutes for I & II)

A. ((click)) The Meaning of Kindness – "Kindness is a sincere desire for the happiness of others. Kindness is the inner disposition, created by the Holy Spirit, that causes us to be sensitive to the needs of others, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual."¹

Webster's Dictionary defines *Kindness* as "the quality or state of being gentle and considerate."²

Webster's Dictionary defines *Kind* as "having or showing a gentle nature and a desire to help others: wanting and liking to do good things and to bring happiness to others"³

In the OT, kindness or lovingkindness is often a translation of the Hebrew "HESED." Hesed is a theologically rich word that attempts to encompass God's *indescribable* loving, merciful character and disposition toward humanity. Michael Card (in his book, *Inexpressible*) attempted to define it this way: "When the person from whom I have a right to expect nothing gives me everything."⁴

B. ((click)) God's Kindness

Kindness is the quality that allows us to be tender, benevolent, useful, and helpful to others. Our actions will have the flavor of grace. *Our practice of kindness is only possible because we have experienced multiple examples of God's kindness toward us.*

1. ((click)) Salvation

We were attracted to the message of the gospel and responded with faith for salvation because of our personal experience of the kindness of God. We were struck by God's mercy toward us in our sinfulness, and that caused us to want to respond to him by rejecting our rebelliousness and coming into relationship with him.

Titus 3:4-5 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

****Good time to emphasize the Gospel message and encourage ladies to be sure they have a genuine relationship with Christ****

¹ *The Fruitful Life*, by Jerry Bridges, quote from page 117

² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kindness>

³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kind>

⁴ *Inexpressible-Hesed and the Mystery of God's Lovingkindness*, by Michael Card, quote from page 5

2. **((click)) Provision for Our Daily Needs**

Psalm 23 is a poem written to praise the way God provides for our daily needs. A defenseless sheep requires every single need to be met by a shepherd. In much the same way, God has preplanned for every single need we have to be met. He provides our breath, our food, our quiet, our refreshment, our guidance, our protection, our discipline, our instruction, and our healing. His kindness is on display when he makes provision to meet our needs. We are able to reflect his image in the way that we help to provide for the daily needs of others as well.

Psalm 23:1-6 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

God's kindness is known for being nurturing and gentle. In Isaiah 40:11 God gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart, gently leading those that have young. In Isaiah 40:29 we see God reaching out in kindness to provide the strength and power we need when we are weak and weary.

Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 40:29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

3. **((click)) Intervention During Crises** - Throughout the Scripture we can see God acting in kindness to the grieving (I Kings 17:8-24) and the rejected (Gen 21:9-21). Jesus was known to be so moved with compassion that he stopped his plans and adjusted his schedule to meet the tangible needs of those he met along the way (Mark 6:34; Mark 7:29; Mark 10:46-52). The kindness of our shepherd influenced him to leave his comfort to seek and save the lost (Luke 15:3-7).

II. **((click)) Kindness-- How It Is Manifested**

A. **((click)) Awareness of Others** – Kindness begins with the simple awareness that there are others around you everywhere you go. The simplest expression of kindness is the thoughtfulness we can express to the people in our lives. Examples of kindnesses are: a smile as you pass someone, looking at people's eyes when you talk to them, being courteous, saying thank you to people when they help you, offering an encouraging word, helping an elderly person, paying attention to a child when they talk to you, etc. **You will be unable to apply the character quality of kindness unless you have a sincere interest in the happiness of those people that are around you in the normal course of life's events.**

Kindness to others will not be possible for the person who is self-absorbed and self-interested. Kindness requires an awareness of people other than ourselves. It requires thinking outside of our own interests. It takes the gentle nature described in the dictionary definitions to be able to take the time and energy it requires to look around you and try to figure out how to do good to those in your realms of influence.

Mark 6:30-44 shows an instance where Jesus was in the midst of heavy public ministry and was experiencing a need for rest and peace. Jesus and the disciples slipped away by boat to find a quiet place to rest and be solitary. However, when they landed at the shore where they were going to rest, they were inundated by a very needy crowd. Mark 6:34 says that when Jesus saw the needs of those

around him, he noticed and he felt compassion. He then redirected his energy to meet those physical needs of the crowd, and also, to teach his disciples how to serve.

Mark 6:34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

In contrast, II Timothy 3:1-5 describes that there will be a type of person who appears to be godly but is actually not. Those people are described as being lovers of self, proud, arrogant, abusive, heartless, brutal, not loving good, and breaking the trust of those who rely on them. The godly person will be known for their self-sacrificial kindness to others. The person posing as a godly person will be known for not being the very antithesis of being kind.

II Timothy 3:1-5 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

B. ((click)) Awareness of Needs – Kindness to others will only happen if we not only notice the people around us, but also, take the time required to learn about their needs. Becoming aware of the needs around us requires a schedule flexible enough that it leaves room for opportunities to talk to others, spend time with others, and listen to others. Becoming aware of needs around us requires us to ask good questions, make good observations, and sometimes even use our imaginations to dream about what needs might be realities. It is wise to make sure you are not answering a need before you hear all of the information.

Prov 18:13 He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him.

Phil 2:3-4 instructs to restrain ourselves from doing anything out of selfish ambition or empty conceit. Instead, we are instructed to consider the interests of others and to value their needs above our own.

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

We have the capacity to increase the unity of our community and church when we look out for the needs of others and sacrifice ourselves, our desires, and our preferences to meet those needs. One of the tools believers have to use that enables us to practice Creation Mandate #4 (Subdue the Earth) is the tool of being kindly aware of the needs around us. As we are selflessly aware of the needs around us and we work to meet those needs we are helping to squelch disorder and every evil practice

James 3:16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

C. ((click)) Freedom from ulterior motives and selfish agendas – It is possible to view life and our surroundings through the lens of what we will get out of a certain situation. Often, we approach situations with an agenda. Sometimes we even use our powers of observation, our interpersonal skills, and our intellect to figure out ways to manipulate or influence others to meet our (sometimes) hidden agendas. II Cor 4:2 instructs us to make sure that we put off shameful ways of using deception and distortion to accomplish things.

II Cor 4:2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

III. Goodness – What it is (10 min. for III & IV)

A. ((click)) Meaning of Goodness – Goodness is the *activity* determined in advance for the happiness of others. If “kindness is the inner disposition created by the Holy Spirit that causes us to be sensitive to the needs of others, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual...” then “goodness is kindness in action – words and deeds.”⁵

All true goodness comes from our Creator God—the only one who is truly good. In Psalm 119:68, the psalmist proclaims to God “*You are good; and what you do is good.*” Jesus and the Apostle Paul affirm this and further says that *only* God is good.

Luke 18:19 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. (cf. Matthew 19:17)

Rom. 3:12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. (cf. Ps. 14:3)

It is not that we cannot do good things humanly speaking, but our good deeds are worthless in comparison to God’s perfection and holiness.

Isaiah 64:6a All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. . .

BUT in Christ, we can do genuine good works.

B. ((click)) Part of God’s Salvation Agenda –

God tells us in Eph 2:8-10 that we are saved through faith by grace, and it is completely a gift of God so that none of us could boast about our salvation. Further, God says that he chose to save us *so that we can do* good works. Not only that, the Ephesians passage says that God prepared those good works for us *before* the world was even created. In a humbling look at God’s eternal plan, we can see that the accomplishment of his sovereign plan includes our active deeds of goodness that result in his glory and our good. And we need to notice that good works or deeds of goodness *are expected* as part of our daily walk, not just extreme responses to once in a lifetime crisis situations.

Eph 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

IV. ((click)) Goodness – How it is lived out

A. ((click)) Through Deliberate Deeds – Goodness involves actions. Those actions consist of deeds deliberately done for others’ benefit. Jesus was known for going about doing good (Acts 10:38). The word “deliberate” means to be done or said in a way that is planned or intended or on purpose.”⁶ Doing good to others is not

⁵ The Fruitful Life, by Jerry Bridges, quote from page 117

⁶ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/deliberate>

accidental. It is purposeful, and it is planned. Being deliberate involves thinking -- "to think about or discuss something very carefully in order to make a decision."⁷

In the NT, women who were praised for faithfulness to God were those whose ordinary daily lives were full of the works of goodness for others. In fact, this reputation of good works is part of the qualifications to receive support from the local church.

1 Timothy 5:9-10 Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband,¹⁰ and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.

In a crisis situation, we suddenly become aware of the need to move and act thanks to the surge of adrenaline coursing through our body. Stress hormones put us on high alert for what needs to be done. However, the monotony of daily life may predispose us to become immune to our surroundings. We can become very focused on our to-do list, our priorities, and the people in our immediate circle. Being able to do the many good works that God prepared and planned for us to do requires that we look around and be alert to the many small, and seemingly inconsequential, opportunities during our day.

B. ((click)) Where it is lived out:

1. ((click)) **At Home** -

For all believers, beginning your good works at home is a necessity. We are commanded to meet the needs of our families first before meeting the needs of other people. Chores like taking the trash out, sweeping the kitchen, doing the laundry, cleaning up after meals, and shoveling snow may seem menial until you realize that those deeds are the very acts of goodness designed for us to perform as means of demonstrating God's love to our family.

1 Tim 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

2. ((Click)) **At Church** -

We are also commanded to meet the needs of other believers before we meet the needs of the outside world.

Gal 6:10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

If your full-time work place is in your home and being a homemaker is your vocation, you might be tempted to see certain parts of that job as necessarily evils instead of the divinely appointed opportunities within which you can do good to those around you. These opportunities are first to serve those in your family and secondly to those people which are benefitted by your availability and flexibility. Paul speaks of the homemaker as having great opportunities for good works by caring for children, showing hospitality, caring for the needs of the saints, caring for the afflicted, and devoting herself to good deeds. Notice in Titus 2 that being kind is mentioned right alongside active deeds of goodness --"busy at home."

Titus 2:3-5 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.⁴ Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children,⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

⁷ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/deliberate>

We are all commanded to use our venues to be performing good deeds through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of representing the invisible God. Whether we are working full time in a paid position or working full time as a homemaker, we have the *perfect* position for completing the good works that God prepared for us.

3. **((click)) In our Vocation** – God created us to find satisfaction in our work. In the Garden of Eden before sin entered the world, God placed man in the Garden and instructed him to tend it and keep it. He instructed woman to help man and provide companionship. The man and woman working in complementary unity provided great satisfaction. Although the world is now cursed by sin and work is made more frustrating, God still instructs us to use our God-given abilities to accomplish work.

When we skillfully provide labor in our field to someone who needs that work done, and we do it with a godly attitude, we are completing the good works that God prepared in advance for us to do. If we complete our earthly jobs in the strength of the Lord and for the benefit of those around us, we are honorably meeting the needs of people. Our workplaces are the “primary path of our Christian walk wherein God has planned good deeds for us to do.”⁸ When a doctor shares his knowledge and experience to help a patient heal, he or she is doing good works. When a grocer stocks healthy food to meet the needs of those who need nourishment, he or she is doing good works. When a teacher instructs children and helps them to become lifelong learners, he or she is doing good works. When we faithfully employ the gifts that God has given us at salvation in order to benefit others, we are doing the good works that God set up for us to do before the creation of the world.

1 Cor 12:4-7 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

We must examine our attitudes about our work and our workplace to ensure that we are viewing them correctly. Our work must be engaged and purposeful, completing assignments not just to earn a paycheck but as a means of doing good to those around us. Our workplace must be seen as the divine appointment from God that it is. If he providentially led us to that workplace and has sovereignly allowed our employment there, we must conclude that this workplace is the intended venue where he has chosen for us to do good works at this point in our lives.

C. **((click)) Availability**

When considering how to do the good deeds that God prepared in advance for us to do, we need to contemplate the topic of “availability.” For us to notice and intervene in the needs around us, there must be time in our schedule during which we may be available and flexible enough to meet needs. George Bethune, a famous theologian from the 1800’s wrote:

“True goodness is not merely impulsive, but rational and considerate – it will therefore pause, and be at some trouble to inquire what service, and how best may it be rendered. . . . Goodness should be willing to give time, and thought, and patience, and even labor; not mere money and kind words, and compassionate looks.”⁹

True goodness is untiring as we seek our strength from Christ and remind ourselves that we are only doing what God already planned for us to do in that very moment. Remembering that we are not responsible to perform

⁸ The Fruitful Life, by Jerry Bridges, page 121

⁹ The Fruit of the Spirit, by George Bethune

every good deed the world needs helps us to have the strength to perform the good deeds God *has specifically* planned for us to do in the context of our lives. We do not need to live in full-time Christian ministry to be doing full-time Christian goodness.

Acts 9:36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman **was abounding with deeds of kindness** and charity which she continually did.

Often we may be tempted to become weary in doing good if we view the need to do good deeds as interruptions in our already busy schedule.

Gal 6:9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

God said that the good deeds he saved us to do each day are divine appointments. They are never interruptions in our schedule, derailing us from our goals. **Doing good to those around us--with Christ-like kindness in the power of the Holy Spirit--IS the goal.**

Matt 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

⁴¹"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

((click)) Optional Memory Verse: Titus 3:4-5 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

((click)) Homework

Assign Worksheet #5. This should be read and completed this week and discussed next week.

((click)) Table Discussion Questions (** is also a Large Group Discussion Question)

Application Questions for Kindness content

1. How is God's provision of salvation the greatest kindness we could ever receive?
2. ** How can you purposely practice being aware of others and their needs?
3. Why must kindness be free from ulterior motives and selfish agendas?

Application Questions for Goodness content

4. How is engaging in deliberate deeds of goodness connected to our salvation?
5. ** Why is it important for our deeds of goodness to start in our home?
6. How do you practice being “available” and not so tightly scheduled that you must say “no” to every need that comes along?

Table Time Prayer Request Question:

In what specific ways can we ask Jesus to help you grow in Kindness and Goodness this week?

((click)) Large Group Discussion Question

Table time discussion questions 2 and 5 will be used for large group discussion.