



"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a harder battle."
—Plato

20-Oct-17

The Golden Rule (Part One)

Paul admonishes us in [Ephesians 4:32](#) to "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as [God](#) in Christ forgave you." As [Christians](#), we have a responsibility to be kind, especially to one another in the church.

There are many ways we can show [kindness](#) to others. We can be considerate, compassionate, generous, helpful, sympathetic, empathetic, [merciful](#), thoughtful, or just friendly, depending on what is needed.

In [Luke 6:31](#), [Jesus](#) gives us what has been called "The Golden Rule": "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." We can use this to form the basis of our understanding of kindness. Whatever kind thing we would desire others to do for us, we should do for others.

We all are familiar with the Parable of the Good Samaritan, found in [Luke 10:30-37](#):

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.

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 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.

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." [Jesus asked the lawyer,] "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go, and do likewise." (*New International Version*)

The Bible does not mention how much money the Samaritan made, but [Matthew 20:2](#) informs us that a denarius was a day's wage for a laborer. We will assume that he had a decent job, making the equivalent of \$25/hour. Over an eight-hour day, his "day's wage" would have been \$200, meaning that he gave the innkeeper \$400 for the injured man's needs! This generous donation is in addition to what he had already spent on the man the previous day. Whatever the actual cost was, we can figure that it was more than 40% of what he made in a week—and he offered more if needed. The Samaritan went out of his way to be kind to a total stranger.

[Deuteronomy 22:1-4](#) instructs us regarding our responsibility to be kind to each other:

You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely bring them back to your brother. And if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing that is your brother's, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you must not hide

yourself. You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help lift them up again.

If we can update these verses to make their application more clear for us today, we could paraphrase this as:

You shall not see your brother's or sister's cell phone or iPad laying on a table or bench, and pretend you did not notice them. You shall surely return it to them. And if they are not nearby, or if you do not know them, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until they call you, text you, send you an email, or a message on Facebook. Then you shall restore it to them.

You shall do the same with their jacket, checkbook, wallet, etc., and so shall you do with anything that they may have lost and you have found. You shall do likewise. You must not ignore their loss.

You shall not see your brother's or sister's car with a flat tire or out of gasoline along the side of the road and pass on by as if you had not seen their distress. You shall surely help them get going again.

God's way of life is a way of outgoing concern for the good of others. It is offering a hand to help others to do what they cannot do for themselves. It is doing what we can to heal an injured situation.

[Romans 12:10](#) in the *English Standard Version* commands us, "[Love](#) one another with brotherly affection. *Outdo* one another in showing honor" (emphasis ours throughout). In [Galatians 6:10](#), Paul also writes, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to *all*, and *especially* to those who are of the household of [faith](#)." There are so many ways to be nice to people, and so many people to be nice to. Just look around.

In Part Two, we will see that God has given us a special gift to enable us to practice acts of kindness for each other.

- John Reiss

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Manifesting Kindness](#)

by Martin G. Collins

Many are reluctant to perform acts of kindness, largely because of the cynicism of our society. We desperately need to internalize the godly traits of kindness, mercy, compassion, and tenderness, displacing the carnal traits of bitterness and wrath as a permanent part of our spiritual repertoire in our marriages, family, dealings with our brethren, and society at large. God demonstrates aspects of His lovingkindness in a covenant relationship with us. Kindness plays out throughout the book of Ruth, as well as in the example of the virtuous woman (Proverbs 31). We should give encouragement and help to people in need daily without expecting anything in return—except for the satisfaction and fulfillment that comes automatically from being kind.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[The Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Kindness, the fifth fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, goes hand-in-hand with love. It is an active expression of love toward God and fellow man. As we come out of this calloused world, we must develop kindness through the power of God's Spirit.

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