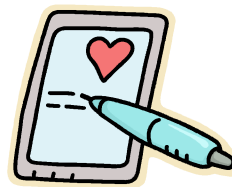


A Word Of Encouragement

May 2007



“KINDNESS”

It all begins with Him – our faithful, loving powerful, merciful God who gives and sustains life. Jeremiah 9:24 NIV declares, “... that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight.” Titus 3:4-7 LB says, “But when the time came for the kindness and love of God our Savior to appear, then he saved us – not because we were good enough to be saved, but because of his kindness and pity – by washing away our sins and giving us the new joy of the indwelling Holy Spirit whom he poured out upon us with wonderful fullness – and all because of what Jesus Christ our Savior did so that he could declare us good in God’s eyes – all because of his great kindness; and now we can share in the wealth of the eternal life he gives us, and we are eagerly looking forward to receiving it.”

Ephesians 2:7-8 LB says, “And now God can always point to us as examples of how very, very rich his kindness is, as shown in all he has done for us through Jesus Christ. Because of his kindness you have been saved through trusting Christ. And even trusting is not of yourselves; it too is a gift from God.”

The Word speaks of God’s loving-kindness (Isaiah 63:7) and his marvelous kindness (Psalm 31:21 KJV). David spoke of the unfailing kindness of the Lord (Psalm 18:50 NIV). Lamentations 3:23 LB says, “Great is his faithfulness; his loving-kindness begins afresh each day.” Even to those the Lord is calling back to Himself He says, “Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful. He is not easily angered; he is full of kindness, and anxious not to punish you.” (Joel 2:13 LB). The Word declares that we are to love our enemies, do good, and lend-promising that our reward shall be great, and we will be children of the Highest; because he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.” (Luke 6:35,36 KJV) Other translations say He is kind to the ungrateful, the wicked and the selfish. Amazing – simple amazing!

Living in the world there are many reasons to be kind – and they are straight from the heart of God. We are to reveal our God to all people – His precious Son, freely given, is not to be kept to ourselves. Ephesians 5:1 AMP says, “Therefore be imitators of God (copy Him and follow his example), as well-beloved children (imitate their father).” We are to show forth His love. 1 Corinthians 13:4 says, “...love is patient, love is kind....”

If you read 2 Timothy 3:1-5 the Lord describes what people will be in the last days. Ungodliness, selfishness, lovers of themselves, behaving in cruel harsh ways, proud and boastful – even sneering at God. Much evil in every way! God’s solution – “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21 NIV). We have Christ within us (His nature and character) and we can show Christ to the world and reflect Him in our thoughts, words and actions. God’s heart is toward all people - He is not willing that one should be lost. May we respond to that.

When we (by choice and decision) think, speak and walk in kindness God notices and is pleased. “A kindhearted woman gains respect and honor”(Proverbs 11:16, NIV and LB). Proverbs 11:17 NIV says, “A kind man benefits himself.” The same scripture in the Living Bible says, “Your own soul is nourished when you are kind.” Proverbs 14:31 NIV says, “He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.” Proverbs 14:21 NIV says, “blessed is he who is kind to the needy.” Proverbs 19:17 RSV says, “he who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.”

In Titus 2:5 NIV God speaks to women – *“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.”* We as women of God have a unique position. By “walking out” what God has given us and in making us – the lives of those nearest to us can be blessed, touched, and strengthened in God. I believe that those who are closest to us should receive the best of us – our gifts, graces, and all that God has so richly given should be poured out on our spouses, children and families. Patsy Clairmont said, “Little kindnesses offered regularly add up to big, heart-changing attitudes for all involved.” Proverbs 31:26 speaking of the virtuous woman says, *“and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”* Charity (or love) begins at home – but it doesn’t end there.

Those around us (starting with family) and moving out to others – our brothers and sister in Christ, our neighbors and associates, the people we work with and those in the world (strangers to us but not to God!) can experience Christ in and through us - that the kingdom will be extended, God’s heart will be blessed, and **He** will be glorified.

We are not by nature kind people. The natural man is selfish and cares about himself – his needs, wishes and desires. Scripture bears this out. But we have a new nature given by God when we began our new life with Him. Kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. “But the fruit of the (Holy) Spirit (the work which His presence within accomplishes) is love, joy, (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness, (benevolence), faithfulness, gentleness, (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence)” (Galatians 5:22-23 AMP). When you became born again and gave your life to Him, the seed of all these fruits were placed in your spirit. We do have a part in the growth and development from seed to fruit in our lives. Quoting Patsy Clairmont – “Hoping and wishing aren’t going to produce kindness, for this quality is a fruit of the Spirit. That means the Lord is willing to work kindness into my heart if I’m receptive, and I must work out kindness with His empowerment.” We must desire and pray for kindness as we see our need and want what He wants.

Kindness is direct, intentional and with purpose. “For a while the term random acts of kindness drew interest and applause. And that was good. Yet I believe we are called to do more than randomly sow seeds of kindness. We are admonished to continually extend ourselves to a road-weary world.” (Patsy Clairmont) There is nothing random about it. That which we have received of the Lord (and He has been and is so very kind to us!) is to be passed on. We need to observe and reach out to people in a new way. John Watson said, “Be Kind. Everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” Looking at the outward we sometimes miss it – but reaching out, speaking to people and listening to them, caring about them and walking in kindness will make a difference. Realize that you can cause change – in hearts, in attitudes, in situations, and even in the atmosphere. People respond to kindness. They may not remember all we say to them but they will remember kindness, compassion, interest in them, and help.

Kindness is always needed in the Body of Christ. The Lord expects us to respect, honor, bless, help, and be kind to each other. When we gather together the Lord is glorified as we choose His way. The wonderful thing is this – when we accept our responsibility to love and care for each other, the Lord turns responsibility into privilege! No longer a struggle and something we have to do but something we want to do. We become the WORD of GOD to the lives around us. Glory to God!



Consider these Scriptures:

Ephesians 4:32 NIV says, *“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:15 NIV says, *Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.”*

Colossians 3:12 NIV states, *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”*

2 Timothy 2:24 NIV says, *“And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone...”*

Romans 12:10 KJV says, *“Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.”*

Talk about blessing! Talk about fruitfulness! When you care for others like God cares for you – your life will increase and expand! You will bear fruit within and without – the life of God will be shown, demonstrated and given to others – and He (alone) will be glorified!

In the Name of the One who is Loving-Kindness to Us –
Toni Quinn
“For His Glory” Women’s Ministry

KINDNESS QUOTES

“A kind heart is a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity freshen into smiles.”
Washington Irving

“The person who sows seeds of kindness enjoys a perpetual harvest.”
Author Unknown

“Twas a thief that said the last kind word to Christ: Christ took the kindness and forgave the theft.”
Robert Browning

“The heart benevolent and kind, the most resembles God.”
Robert Burns

“The greatest thing anyone can do for his heavenly Father is to be kind to some of his other children.”
Henry Drummond

“Life is short, and we have never too much time for gladdening the hearts of those who are traveling the dark journey with us. Oh, be swift to love, make haste to be kind.”
Henri Frederick Amiel

“The ministry of kindness is a ministry which may be achieved by all, rich and poor, learned and illiterate. Brilliance of mind and capacity for deep thinking have rendered great service to humanity, but by themselves they are powerless to dry a tear or mend a broken heart.”
Anonymous

“An anxious heart weighs a man down but a kind word cheers him up.”
Proverbs 12:25 NIV

