



KINDNESS

Monday, 14 – Sunday, 20 July 2025

July 2025

Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
27	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
29	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
30	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
31	28	29	30	31			

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Introduction: Agape-Shaped Kindness

But the fruit of the Spirit is love [agápē]...kindness —Galatians 5:22

Paul's phrasing in Galatians 5:22 is precise: *the fruit* (singular) of the Spirit is love—*agape*. What follows in the list—joy, peace, patience, kindness, and beyond—are not separate fruits but expressions, flavours, or favours of this singular fruit. The Spirit does not produce a mixed harvest but cultivates one Christ-shaped life, revealed through different hues of divine love.



Kindness, then, is agape in motion. It is love stepping out from intention into visible action—agape reaching, embracing, restoring. The Greek word often translated “kindness” is *chrēstotēs*, signifying more than pleasantness. It carries the sense of moral integrity expressed through beneficence—goodness that is both gentle and useful. It describes a character that is gracious, not passive; active, not just agreeable.

In Romans 2:4, *chrēstotēs* is used of God's kindness that leads us to repentance. It's not indulgent, but redemptive. In Christ, we see this kindness modelled—a love that touches lepers, protects the shamed, confronts exploitation, and remains generous to the ungrateful. It's a kindness that costs. One that reflects heaven's heartbeat.

This devotional invites you to explore how *chrēstotēs* is cultivated in you—not as a natural trait but as a Spirit-grown flavour of agape. Over the coming reflections, you'll be prompted to examine where kindness has been reduced to niceness, where it needs to be recovered as holy boldness, and how agape invites you to respond in ways that restore dignity, challenge cruelty, and carry the fragrance of Christ.

Let this be an invitation to not just feel love, but to act in it. Kindness is not optional sentiment—it is the outstretched hand of agape. And as the Spirit bears this fruit within you, may your life become a channel through which God's redemptive tenderness reaches a fractured world.

Tuesday, 8 July 2025

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event reminders.

**TAP
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Men's Breakfast

Saturday 19th July

10am

The Mermaid, IP1 2EN

TAP here to SIGN UP



SIGN UP



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Sunday 27th July

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IIC NOTICEBOARD



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Sunday July 20th 6.30pm

Ipswich International Church Barlark Corner Portman Road Ipswich IP1 2NB



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The Kindness of God

Titus 3:4-5

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Saviour and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. (BSB)



Before we can begin to live out true kindness, we must first understand where it comes from. Kindness didn't originate with us—it originates with God. His kindness is not shallow or conditional. It is rich, powerful, and deeply personal. It doesn't wait for us to get our lives together. It meets us in our weakness, our sin, and our mess—and it chooses to love anyway.

Think about that: God's kindness *appeared*. It showed up. It took on flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. And through Jesus, God's kindness became visible, tangible, and sacrificial. He didn't just feel kindly toward us from a distance. He entered our world, carried our burdens, and offered us salvation—not because we deserved it, but because His mercy overflows.

So often we treat kindness like a reward for good behaviour. But God's kindness flips that idea upside down. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). His kindness doesn't depend on our performance—it flows from His unchanging love.

When we begin to grasp how kind God has been to us, it changes everything. It humbles us. It softens us. It moves us to extend that same grace to others, even when they don't "deserve" it—just like we didn't.

The journey to agape-shaped kindness starts here: letting the kindness of God sink deep into your soul. Let it comfort you. Let it heal you. And let it reshape how you see the people around you.



(a) How should the truth that God saved us "not because of righteous things we had done" affect the way we view our own failures or spiritual growth? (b) [When we feel unworthy or condemned, how can we preach the truth of God's kindness to ourselves?](#) (c) In what ways do we still subtly rely on our own goodness rather than resting in God's kindness? How can we combat this?



Father, thank You for Your incredible kindness to me. I didn't earn it and I could never repay it, yet You poured it out freely through Jesus. Help me to rest in Your love today. Teach me to see others through the lens of the same mercy You have shown me. May Your kindness not only fill me—but flow through me. In Jesus' name, amen.



Kindness in the Life of Jesus

Matthew 14:13-14

¹³ When Jesus heard about John, He withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. But the crowds found out about it and followed Him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When He stepped ashore and saw a large crowd, He had compassion on them and healed their sick. (BSB)



If we want to understand what agape-shaped kindness looks like in action, we only need to look at Jesus.

Jesus never simply *spoke* about kindness—He lived it. His kindness wasn't a scheduled act or a public performance. It flowed from a heart that saw people. Over and over in the Gospels, we read that Jesus was “moved with compassion.” He noticed the hungry, the lonely, the forgotten. He paused for the sick, touched the untouchable, and welcomed the outcast. His kindness was not reactive; it was intentional. It didn't wait for perfect conditions. It met real people in their mess.

In Matthew 14, we see Jesus and His disciples seeking rest after hearing of John the Baptist's death. Yet when the crowds followed Him, needy and desperate, Jesus didn't turn them away. His heart was moved. And in kindness, He healed them—even in His own grief and weariness. That's the nature of agape-shaped kindness: it gives when it's hard. It views others through the lens of love—not mere convenience. Because true love comes at a cost.

This is a powerful reminder for us. Our acts of kindness don't always need to be grand gestures. Often, the most Christlike kindness is quiet and sacrificial—holding space for someone's pain, choosing patience over irritation, speaking gently when harshness feels justified. Every time we act this way, we reflect Jesus to the world around us.

The Spirit of Christ in us is not passive. He sees the hurting, the lonely, the overlooked. And if we'll slow down and open our hearts, He will move us—just like He was moved—to respond with kindness.



(a) How is Jesus' compassion different from mere pity or polite concern? (b) **Can you recall a time when Jesus met you in your need with kindness?** (c) Is there someone in your life today who might need to be seen—not fixed, but noticed, valued, and loved? (d) **What would it look like to show Jesus-shaped kindness to that person?**



Jesus, thank You for Your kindness that sees me, knows me, and never turns away. Help me not to rush past people today. Make my heart tender like Yours. Let my kindness reflect the compassion You showed to those who needed You most. Use me to be Your hands and feet today. Amen.

GIVING
as an act of worship
BEFORE GOD
2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

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Kindness amid Conflict

Luke 6:27–28

²⁷ But to those of you who will listen, I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (BSB)



It's easy to be kind when people are kind to us. But what about when they're not?

Jesus didn't just teach us to love our enemies—He modeled it. On the cross, as He suffered unjustly, He prayed, “Father, forgive them.” His kindness was not dependent on how He was treated. It was rooted in who He was—and who His Father is.

Agape-shaped kindness isn't fragile. It doesn't withdraw when faced with conflict. It doesn't lash out or retreat into silence. Instead, it leans in. It responds to hostility not with revenge, but with compassion. That doesn't mean ignoring pain or enabling abuse. But it does mean refusing to let bitterness shape our response.

This is where *chrēstotēs*—Spirit-shaped kindness—shines brightest. It's the strength to hold peace in a tense conversation. It's the courage to pray for someone who's wounded you. It's the quiet, Spirit-empowered posture that says, “I won't repay evil for evil. I will let Christ live through me.”

Kindness in conflict doesn't mean we stop speaking truth—it means we speak it with gentleness and love. It means we remember that the person in front of us is not our enemy. Even if their actions hurt, they are still someone God longs to redeem.

This kind of kindness is impossible apart from the Spirit. But with Him, it becomes not only possible—but powerful.



(a) Jesus doesn't call us to feel affection but to act in love—even when it's costly. Who is He asking you to be kind to, bless, or pray for today?

(b) [Could kindness to enemies become a witness? Share a time you saw this break down barriers.](#) (c) How can we support each other in this hard calling (e.g., accountability, shared prayer)?



Lord, You showed kindness to me when I was still Your enemy. Teach me to walk in that same love. Fill me with Your Spirit, so I don't react in anger but respond in grace. Let Your gentleness shape my heart, especially when it's hard. Help me to be kind—not because others deserve it, but because You are kind, and You live in me. In Jesus' name, amen.



Kindness in Our Words

Proverbs 16:24

²⁴ Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
(BSB)



Words hold power; words tear down or build up. With just a few sentences, we can lift someone's spirit—or crush it. Scripture reminds us again and again that our words are not neutral. They either build up or tear down. In a world filled with harshness, sarcasm, and criticism, kind words are like fresh water to a thirsty soul.

Kindness doesn't only live in actions—it speaks. And when the Holy Spirit fills our hearts, kindness will shape our conversations. That doesn't mean we avoid hard truths or pretend everything's okay. But it does mean that our tone, our timing, and our intention all come under the influence of agape love.

Think about Jesus. When He spoke, His words carried both grace and truth. To the woman caught in adultery, He said, “Neither do I condemn you... go and sin no more.” His words didn't ignore sin—but they didn't crush her either. They restored her, built her up and gave her a sense of hope and a positive direction. That's what agape-shaped kindness does. It speaks life where shame once lived. It softens hard hearts. It heals.

Sometimes, kindness is shown by withholding harsh words or choosing to express complaints privately in prayer rather than publicly. Other times, kindness means speaking up when someone feels invisible or unloved. It's the encouragement that reminds a weary friend they're not alone.

Ask yourself today: *What kind of atmosphere do my words create?* Do they invite people to draw near, or push them away? Do they reflect the gentle kindness of Jesus?

Let the Spirit shape your speech. Let your words become a well of grace for everyone who hears them.



(a) Can you recall a time when someone's kind words deeply encouraged you? What made them so life-giving? (b) *What kind of “taste” do my words typically leave—bitter, bland, or sweet?* (c) When am I most tempted to speak ungraciously (e.g., when stressed, criticized, or tired)? (d) *Is there someone I've spoken harshly to recently? How could I bring “health” to that relationship now?*



Father, thank You for speaking kindness over me—even when I least deserved it. Help me today to reflect Your heart in my words. Guard my tongue from harm and fill my mouth with grace. Let what I say bring healing, not hurt. May my words always carry the sweetness of Your love. In Jesus' name, amen.



Kindness to the Forgotten and Overlooked

Matthew 25:40

⁴⁰ And the King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.’ (BSB)



Agape-shaped kindness always has its eyes open—especially toward those the world tends to overlook.

Jesus constantly noticed people others ignored: the leper on the outskirts of town, the blind beggar silenced by the crowd, the woman with no one to defend her. In His eyes, they were never a burden—they were beloved. He didn’t just tolerate their presence; He welcomed it. He saw them fully, treated them with dignity, and responded with compassion.

In Matthew 25, Jesus speaks of a future moment when He will separate people based on how they treated “the least of these”—the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the sick, the imprisoned. His words are sobering, because they remind us that kindness to the forgotten is not optional for His followers—it’s a reflection of whether we truly know Him.

We live in a culture that rewards visibility, influence, success, and self-absorption. But God’s kingdom values the opposite. He draws near to the lowly. He dwells with the humble, inviting us not only to be concerned in our own affairs but to be interested in the affairs of others (not as a busybody, but as somebody who genuinely cares for others), especially the forgotten and the overlooked. And when we extend kindness to someone the world has passed by, we’re not just doing a good deed—we’re honoring Jesus Himself.

Agape-shaped kindness looks for the lonely person in the room. It seeks out the one who doesn’t “fit in.” It sits with the suffering, reaches out to the isolated, and gives without expecting anything in return. It says, *“You matter, because God sees you—and so do I.”*

Ask God today to help you see people as He does. Not through the lens of status or convenience, but through the eyes of love.



(a) Who are “the least of these” in your community? (Consider the hungry, thirsty, stranger, sick, imprisoned) (b) [How does this verse redefine “ministry” from programs to personhood?](#) (c) What small act of kindness could remind them they are seen and valued? (d) [When have you felt forgotten, and how did someone’s kindness lift you?](#)



Jesus, You never passed by the overlooked. You saw what others refused to see. Open my eyes today to those who feel invisible or forgotten. Help me slow down long enough to notice. Let my kindness reflect Your heart—and remind them that they matter deeply to You. In Your name, amen.



Kindness That Costs Something

Luke 10:33–34



Kindness isn't always convenient. Sometimes it interrupts our schedule, stretches our comfort, or costs us something tangible. But it's in those moments that kindness becomes most like Christ's.

In Luke 10, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. A man lies beaten and helpless on the side of the road. Two religious leaders—men who should have shown mercy—walk past. But a Samaritan, culturally considered an outsider, stops. He sees. He feels. And then he *acts*.

This wasn't just a pat on the back or a polite word. His kindness cost him something. He used his own resources—bandages, oil, money, time—and risked his own safety to care for someone who, under normal circumstances, might have despised him.

This is agape-shaped kindness. It's not shallow sentiment. It's sacrificial love. It asks, *"What does love require of me right now?"* and then steps forward, regardless of the cost.

For us, the cost may not be dramatic. It may look like giving time we didn't plan to give. Offering forgiveness when it still hurts. Giving generously when it stretches our budget. Choosing patience when anger would be easier.

When we live this way, we reflect the kindness of Jesus—the One who laid down everything for us. His kindness didn't come cheap. It led Him to the cross.

So today, don't be afraid of the kindness that costs something. That kind of kindness echoes eternity. It shows the world a glimpse of what God is like.



(a) Has God ever used someone's sacrificial kindness to impact your life? (b) What might agape-shaped kindness require of you today—even if it costs something? (c) Are you willing to let the Spirit lead you into costly kindness?



Jesus, Your kindness wasn't passive—it was costly, and it changed everything. Thank You for giving Yourself so freely for me. Today, help me not to shrink back from the kind of kindness that asks something of me. Make me willing, make me generous, and make me bold to love like You. Amen.

PAUSE

OBSERVE

REFLECT

Sunday
20 July 2025

A Life Marked by Kindness

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”
— *James 1:22 (ESV)*

This week, we’ve walked slowly through what *agape-shaped kindness* truly looks like. We began with the kindness of God—*chrēstotēs*—His tender, undeserved mercy that meets us in our need. We looked at how Jesus modelled kindness in every interaction, especially when it was inconvenient or costly. We explored how kindness can speak through our words, flow into moments of conflict, reach the overlooked, and compel us to act sacrificially.

Now, before rushing ahead to what’s next, today is an invitation to *pause*. Let this be a quiet, prayerful space. Ask yourself:

a) **What ministered to you most this week?** _____

b) **What is God saying to you?**

(Is He inviting you to slow down? To notice someone you've overlooked? To speak differently? To serve where it costs?) _____

c) **What will you do in response?**

What action step—big or small—will you take this week to walk in agape-shaped kindness?

d) **What would it look like for your life to be marked by kindness—not occasionally, but consistently?** _____

A Simple Plan of Obedience:

You might want to outline a few commitments, such as “I will reach out to [name] this week with encouragement.” “I will begin praying for someone I’ve struggled to be kind to.”

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, thank You for walking with me this week. Thank You for revealing the kindness of the Father and shaping that same kindness in me. This should not remain as inspiration— it must become transformation. Show me the steps I need to take. I receive the courage to follow through. May my life reflect the gentleness, mercy, and power of Jesus through kindness. Let me be marked by love that looks like You. Amen.
