



## KINDNESS MATTERS

By Jon Crantz

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. **Galatians 5:22-26**

One of the great tragedies of the Christian faith is this: those who claim to be Christian often don't behave like they're Christian. It's a common, but devastating misconception and mis-application of the gospel to a person's life. Christianity isn't just an inward journey, its outward also. Belief in Jesus Christ isn't just an internal and intellectual activity, its external and lived out. Christianity is not just what a person believes, it's also, and equally, how they live and act and behave.

Think of the Fruit of the Spirit. Some of you read these qualities as internal *only*. Love, joy, peace...these are all something that we feel. While that is indeed true, The Fruit of the Spirit is not an internal condition ONLY, but rather, the Fruit is expressed and displayed and lived out.

Now, to the Fruit that I think is needed in our current season: kindness. Kindness is a perfect example of the above rationale. One cannot *declare* or *believe* that they are kind without *being* kind. Kindness is always demonstrated. In the first century or so of the Church, Christians were often referred to as, "the **KIND** ones." Kindness was a quality that was lived out in believers. Oh, if that would be true of me and you!

The way in which we can grow in kindness to others is by dwelling on and reveling in the kindness of God towards us. Would you marinate on this text today from Lamentations 3:22-23:

"The steadfast love (loving kindness) of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

As we go about our week, as we speak to waitresses and co-workers, as we engage in conversations about politics and protests, as we speak to our friends, spouses, children, and strangers, let us live into our identity as, "the Kind Ones."