

YEAR OF GROWTH

KINDNESS

WEEK 1

EXPLANATION

Definitions:

The Greek word for 'kindness' is *philanthropia* – meaning, “fondness, affection or love for mankind; benevolence.” The English word ‘philanthropy’ comes from this Greek word. The word used in 2 Peter 1:7 is *philadelphia* – meaning, “fraternal affection or brotherly love.”

One other Greek word translated as ‘kindness’ is *chrestotes* – meaning, “moral excellence, goodness, integrity, or kindness.” This word has to do with usefulness or being employed (working) toward something. Thus, kindness has to do with providing something useful to someone in need.

The Hebrew word for ‘kindness’ is also translated as “mercy,” “lovingkindness,” and “goodness.” Webster defines kindness as “good will; benevolence; that temper or disposition which delights in contributing to the happiness of others, which is exercised cheerfully in gratifying their wishes, supplying their wants or alleviating their distresses.”

Day One – Sunday

Reflect on the previous lessons concerning faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, and godliness. It is in our faith and to our faith that we are to add brotherly kindness. Think upon the definitions of the words that God used to describe kindness. Pray for wisdom in understanding this characteristic. Pray for strength as you prepare for this study.

Day Two – Monday

Galatians 5:22-23

Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. Here, the word for ‘kindness’ is translated as “gentleness” in the KJV. Yet, this is the word that has to do with providing that which is useful to those who are in need. It is always good to show kindness to others.

Day Three – Tuesday

1 Peter 1:22-25

Kindness is to be demonstrated in the church. Obeying the Gospel leads one to a genuine and sincere love of the brethren. The Christian is to show kindness to other Christians because we are family in Christ! We are to love each other as brothers and sisters. We are to love one another earnestly and intensely out of a pure heart.

Day Four – Wednesday**Ephesians 4:29-32**

Kindness toward our brethren in Christ is demonstrated in many ways, but perhaps most powerfully in our willingness to forgive. The Christian is to have compassion on his brother who has sinned and is seeking forgiveness. Our hearts are to be tender and open to forgiveness. As the Lord has forgiven us, we must be willing to forgive one another. Our forgiveness is that useful thing that is provided to one in need.

Day Five – Thursday**1 Thessalonians 4:8-12**

Kindness must be extended beyond the local congregation. We are to love the brotherhood (1 Pet. 2:17). Brotherly love and kindness are commanded by God. Yet, they extend to other congregations throughout the world. Thus, we help to support our brethren in sister congregations. “Let brotherly love continue” (Hebrews 13:1).

Day Six – Friday**Matthew 5:43-48**

Kindness must be shown to those who are in the world. Remember that this word describes a “love of mankind.” Thus, we must be kind to all – even our enemies. This is often challenging, but it helps us to become more like our Father in Heaven. He loved us even when we were enemies and sinners (Rom. 5:8). By showing kindness to our enemies, we may save their souls (Rom. 12:19-21).

Day Seven – Saturday**Ephesians 2:4-10**

God’s kindness was demonstrated to man in the giving of His only-begotten Son. Out of kindness, God showed mercy, love, grace, exceeding riches, and exalting life. We must learn to be kind to others as our Father in Heaven has been kind to us.