

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER



**WEEK  
FOUR**

**Theme: Kindness & Gentleness**

**Song for Reflection: “God, You’re So Good” (Passion)**

**Suggested Video: [www.bit.ly/RCC40DAYSWK4](http://www.bit.ly/RCC40DAYSWK4)**

## **Day 22 – Wednesday, August 7**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. [Galatians 5:22-23 NIV]*

Think of a flush, vibrant grape vine, with plump, juicy grapes hanging off the branches, with people plucking the grapes and enjoying the delicious, sweet, nourishing fruit. That’s what God wants us to be. If we’re branches, and He’s the life-producing vine, He wants to produce vibrancy in us and *fruit* in our lives that nourishes the whole world around us. All of the fruit that God’s spirit is vital to our life with him. Without ignoring the rest, we’re going to focus on two of them that are listed – *kindness* and *gentleness* – two qualities that, when missing, turns the world sour. These two fruits are very interrelated – kindness has to do with integrity, moral goodness, and gentleness; and gentleness in turn also means a mildness of spirit, also known as “meekness”.

But don’t mistake “meekness” for “weakness”! Christ is kind, humble, gentle and meek (Matthew 11:29; 2 Corinthians 10:1); but he is anything but weak and wishy-washy. In fact, his moral integrity and strength was unwavering. But he expressed it with *kindness* and with *gentleness*.

Do you think you are characterized by kindness? By gentleness? These are critical elements to any pursuit of God...and we should not have any understanding of *strong faith* without it including a *gentle and kind spirit*. *Start this week with a conversation with God about the fruits of the spirit, and in particular, kindness and gentleness. Ask him to reveal things about you as you reflect, and prepare your heart for change.*

## **Day 23 – Thursday, August 8**

*And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. [2 Timothy 2:24-26 NIV]*

The apostle Paul wrote this to Timothy, a leader in the church; but the characteristics he describes applies to all Christians, regardless of what function they play in God’s church.

Do you desire to serve the Lord? Is that your heart? Then the apostle tells us the proof is in the pudding:

- You’ll take the time to learn His Word and have care to treat it responsibly (2 Timothy 2:15);
- you’ll avoid gossip and other unfruitful “babblings” (2:16-18);

- in the strength and confidence that you're a child of God, you'll turn your back on sin (2:19);
- you'll prepare your heart so that you can be used by God (2:20-21) by fleeing lust and foolish arguing and pursue godly qualities like peace (2:22-23);
- and you'll be *kind and gentle to all* (2:24-26), including taking care to gently share your faith with those who oppose the Gospel, and hope that they will receive Christ's love and truth.

*Do you see the focus of the heart for anyone who claims they want to serve the Lord? Talk to God today, and ask Him to do heart surgery wherever it's needed.*

## **Day 24 – Friday, August 9**

*David thought, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me." [2 Samuel 10:2a NIV] Part 1*

David remembered a kindness that Hanun's father, Nahash, had done for him, and he sought to 'pay it forward'. Hanun's father Nahash, the Ammonite king, was not a friend to David's people (see 1 Samuel 11); yet at some point had shown a kindness to David, likely as other foreign kings had in David's past when he was fleeing from the wrath of Saul (see 1 Samuel 22). And David didn't forget that kindness...

Is there someone that has been kind to you? Have you thanked God for them? Tell God in prayer. Have you thanked them for it? Take the time to follow-up and so on and so on.

## **Day 25 – Saturday, August 10**

*David thought, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me." [2 Samuel 10:2a NIV] Part 2*

When David remembered a kindness that Hanun's father, Nahash, had done for him, he didn't stop with being thankful for it; he sought to 'pay it forward'.

Kindness isn't always repaid in this world; but kindness should beget kindness. And if a kindness is done to us, we should remember it by choosing to take action to do the same.

Is there someone that has been kind to you? How can you pay that kindness forward to others?

*Pray and ask God to prompt your heart on how to take action today.*

*"Be kind and tender-hearted to one another..." (Ephesians 4:32)*

## **Day 26 – Sunday, August 11**

*Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. [Galatians 6:1-2 NIV]*

We all "live by the Spirit" at times when we're walking well with God; and we all sin and fail at other times. God tells us how to act like His church – those walking strongly at the moment can help those who are stumbling. But we need to do it *gently*, not harshly or judgmentally; and always with a recognition that we too can fall at any time.

When we help each other by carrying our burdens together and restoring each other, we fulfill Christ's law of love, where he said to "A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)

*Is there a sin that is entangling you? Bring it to a trusted brother or sister in Christ who will help restore you gently. Or perhaps you can help a friend who is struggling. Offer gentle support, and do it wisely, remembering that you too are not beyond temptation. Pray about this today.*

## Day 27 – Monday, August 12

*Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. [Philippians 4:5 NIV]*

Remember when you were a kid, how you'd always behave better if mom or dad was standing around? Scripture reminds us that God is never far away, and Christ could return at any moment to judge the world. But God doesn't tell us to respond to this urgency with zeal or callousness. He tells us to respond to it with gentleness toward all. "Gentleness" here can be understood as "patience"; even "modesty". In other words, God wants our outward behavior and inward character to paint a picture to the world of the reality of the Lord who will return, because His work is already clearly seen *in us*.

*Would the world describe you as gentle? Modest? If you're not sure, you've got something to process with God in prayer today.*

## Day 28 – Tuesday, August 13

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. [Colossians 3:12 NIV]*

Take out your Bible and read some of the verses around this one – if you want you can read the whole letter to the Colossians. Focus on Colossians 3:8-16.

Notice how this set of verses ends with our worship together? That's 'church'. But church is completely powerless if it's not built on the foundation of a heart transformation that's described by the preceding verses. Read these verses carefully a few times. Is your life being shaped in the ways described, so that you fit as a proper piece of God's church? Are there some areas that are still "rough around the edges" that He needs to smooth over?

*Talk to Him about it – He promises to renew you in His image. Then carry that transformation into your next Sunday at Church – after all, you are the one of the living stones that truly makes up God's church (1 Peter 2:4-5)!*

