



COMMUNITY **DISCUSSION**
gr:ups **GUIDE**



SERMON PASSAGE: Ephesians 4:25-32



REVIEW THE SERMON

1. Read the prep verse (Colossians 3:12) and the sermon's Bible passage to recall the content
-



DIGGING DEEPER

1. Be Like Christ

Paul is concentrating on teaching the believers in Ephesus to be like Christ. He presents **three principles to be like Christ** in Ephesians 4:22-24 (i.e., the "therefore" that Paul refers to in verse 25)

- a. Lay aside the old self (**stop the bad**)
 - i. As believers, the old man no longer has authority over us and we can, by our Spirit-led choice, choose to lay aside any evil behavior
- b. Be renewed by the Holy Spirit (**think right**)
 - i. The Holy Spirit sets our minds on the truths of God
 - ii. We are no longer set on the old and selfish thinking of the flesh and the world
- c. Put on the new self (**do right**)
 - i. We live out Christ's way

Like all good preachers, Paul does not only preach the truth, but he also tells the hearer how to apply the truth in their lives. That is, Paul does not merely state the three

principles, but he practically tells the believers how to apply the three principles in verses 25-32.

Let’s look at the five application examples Paul provides through the lens of the three principles above. Each example has a:

- a. Prohibition (stop the bad)
- b. Right way to behave (think right)
- c. Prescription on what to do (do right).

Review and reflect on the table below.

PRINCIPLE	Examples or Applications – Be Like Christ				
	1 (v. 25)	2 (v. 26-27)	3 (v. 28)	4 (v. 29-30)	5 (v. 31-32)
	Lying	Anger	Stealing	Bad Language ¹	Bad Attitudes
STOP THE BAD	Put away falsehood	Don’t sin with anger	Steal no longer	Let no unwholesome word proceed from one’s mouth; don’t grieve the Holy Spirit	Let bad attitudes towards others be put away from you
THINK RIGHT	We are members of one another	Discern between righteous and evil anger	Work hard to share	Words are to be grace to those who hear	Christ has forgiven us
DO RIGHT	Speak the truth	Daily handle anger so it is not a foothold for sin	Labor and share	Build up or edify one another	Be kind to one another, forgiving

Answer the following questions:

- a. Which of the five areas do you need to seek God’s help with? What do you need to put off and put on?
- b. How is being like Christ related to having the mind of Christ?

¹ “Language” here refers to the words we say to others in verbal or visual (i.e., texts, social media, etc.) form.

c. How is the church negatively and positively affected by the table above?

2. The Purpose of Kindness

Pastor Eric is walking us through the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Today's focus was kindness. This fruit of the Spirit is also listed in the prep verse, Colossians 3:12.

Some translations use the word "kindness" and some use the word "goodness" to interpret the nuance of the Greek word. Importantly, the Greek word for kindness here is referring to **more than a moral character. Rather, it has action tied to it.** We have no single English word that ties together the nuance of character and action together.

Those of you who recall the Blockbuster video rental store may recall the catchphrase, "Be Kind, Rewind." In this phrase, character and action are combined – a responsible, good person will rewind the video tape before returning it to the store so the video tape is ready for the next person who rents it.

So, kindness can be thought of as²:

- a. "*useful kindness*" - meeting real needs, in God's way, in His timing
- b. "*divine kindness*" - the Spirit-produced goodness which meets the need and avoids human harshness (cruelty)

You catch a glimpse of the "useful kindness" nuance in Romans 11:17-24. Look especially at verse 22 – if people are no longer continuing in His kindness (people are unbelievers) they are not useful for expanding the Kingdom and will cut off.

Notice the perspective of kindness from the two definitions above. Circle whose perspective kindness is from:

God's

Our

One of God's attributes is lovingkindness. It is used to describe His character or His heart toward believers. It is His kindness and steadfast love towards us. His kindness is divine kindness aimed at meeting our needs.

² Adapted from Strong's Concordance and Helps Ministries word studies.

Think of ways God exhibits lovingkindness to us. Find passages in your Bible that speak of these examples of God's lovingkindness towards His people:

- Saving from our enemies _____
- Delivering from or through troubles _____
- Compassion, comfort, and peace _____
- Redemption from sin _____

From reflecting on the verses that point to the examples listed above, can you deduce what the purpose of God's kindness is?

As believers, we are to possess the Spirit-produced fruit of kindness. What is the purpose of kindness in our lives?

Finally, read Proverbs 21:21 and reflect on the impact of kindness.



PRAYER

1. Praise God for His kindness towards us.
2. Pray that we become like Christ as exhibited in Ephesians 4:25-32. Confess what is keeping you from being like Christ.
3. Pray that as we put off the old man, one of the things we clothe ourselves with is kindness (Col 3:12). Pray for this fruit of the Spirit.
4. Pray that Living Hope Bryan is known as a kind church in the community and that we are able to meet community needs in His timing.