

Patience, Kindness, Goodness

Connect Group Guide - 7.21.26

Opening Prayer

Key Scripture

- Galatians 5:22-23
- James 1:3-4
- Romans 2:4
- Micah 6:8

Message Recap

This week's message focused on the second set of three expressions of the fruit of the Spirit: patience, kindness, and goodness. Unlike love, joy, and peace, which reflect the inner evidence of Christ's work in us, these three expressions are tested and revealed through our interactions with others and the pressures of everyday life. The goal of this guide is to help your group move beyond Sunday morning and into honest, practical conversation about what it looks like to live out these qualities throughout the week.

Key Takeaways

- The fruit of the Spirit is singular, not plural. It has nine expressions, and believers are called to pursue all of them, not just the ones that come naturally.
- Love, joy, and peace reflect the inner work of the Spirit. Patience, kindness, and goodness are where that inner work gets tested in the real world.
- Patience does not grow in comfort. God often develops patience in us by walking us through difficulty rather than removing it.
- Kindness is not weakness. It is strength under control, and it is one of the primary ways God draws people toward repentance (Romans 2:4).
- Goodness means doing right because it honors God, not because someone is watching. It is moral excellence and integrity lived out in ordinary moments.
- There is a difference between being a child of God by birth through salvation and growing into someone who genuinely reflects the Father's character through time spent with Him.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question:

1. Think about the past week. When was a moment where your patience, kindness, or goodness was genuinely tested? You do not have to share details, just identify the moment.

On Patience:

2. The message described patience using the Greek word makrothumia, meaning "long-tempered," the opposite of short-tempered. Where in your daily life do you feel most short-tempered? What tends to trigger that response?
3. Pastor Mike made the point that God does not usually produce patience by removing our problems but by walking with us through them. James 1:3-4 describes how the testing of faith produces endurance. Has there been a season in your life where you can look back and see that God was building patience through a difficult situation rather than rescuing you from it? What did you learn from that?
4. The message challenged the group: if you pray for patience, expect God to send someone or something that will test it. How does knowing that change the way you might approach that prayer?
5. Pastor Mike reflected on God's patience toward us, noting that we are living right now because of it. How does meditating on God's patience with you personally change the way you extend patience to others?

On Kindness:

6. The message stated that "one act of kindness can close the door on arguments that you have been arguing for years." Has kindness ever disarmed a conflict in your life, either when you received it or when you offered it? What happened?
7. Romans 2:4 teaches that God's kindness is meant to lead people toward repentance. He does not frighten or force people into surrender; He draws them through kindness. What does it look like practically for your group, your family, or your workplace to reflect that same approach?
8. Pastor Mike pointed out that while people may forget sermons, they remember when someone treated them with genuine kindness. Who in

your life treated you with kindness at a moment when you really needed it? How did that impact you?

9. The message noted that the world currently rewards outrage, insults, and conflict, while the Holy Spirit is working to produce something noticeably different. Where do you find it hardest to resist the pull toward outrage or harshness, whether online, politically, or in personal relationships?

On Goodness:

10. The message defined goodness as "moral excellence, integrity, doing right because it honors God, not because someone is watching." Is there a gap between how you act when others are watching and how you act when no one is? What does that gap reveal?
11. The examples of Joseph and Daniel were used to illustrate goodness under pressure. Both chose to honor God at personal cost. Is there a situation in your own life right now where doing the right thing is costing you something or could cost you something? How are you navigating that?
12. Pastor Mike said that goodness sometimes means confronting evil rather than allowing it to continue unchallenged, but that this must be done in love. What makes that balance difficult? How do you discern when to confront and when to extend grace?
13. Micah 6:8 calls believers to act justly, love faithfulness, and walk humbly with God. Which of those three do you find most natural, and which is the most challenging for you personally?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to commit to before your group meets again.

- Pray specifically for patience this week, and when the test comes, recognize it as God answering that prayer rather than frustrating you.
- Perform one deliberate, unexpected act of kindness for someone who has no reason to expect it from you, particularly someone who has been difficult to love.
- Identify one area of your life where you behave differently when no one is watching. Bring that area before God in prayer and ask for the Spirit's help in closing that gap.

- Spend time reflecting on God's patience toward you personally. Write down three specific moments where God was patient with you when He had every reason not to be, and let that shape how you treat someone this week.
- Evaluate your media and social media habits. Ask honestly whether what you are consuming is feeding patience, kindness, and goodness, or feeding the opposite.

Prayer Requests & Closing

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to different perspectives on Israel; focus on biblical teaching rather than politics
- Encourage participation from everyone, but don't force anyone to share
- If someone wants to give their life to Christ during discussion, be prepared to pray with them
- Keep the discussion focused on personal application, not just theological debate
- Consider inviting someone knowledgeable about Israel or Jewish culture to a future meeting