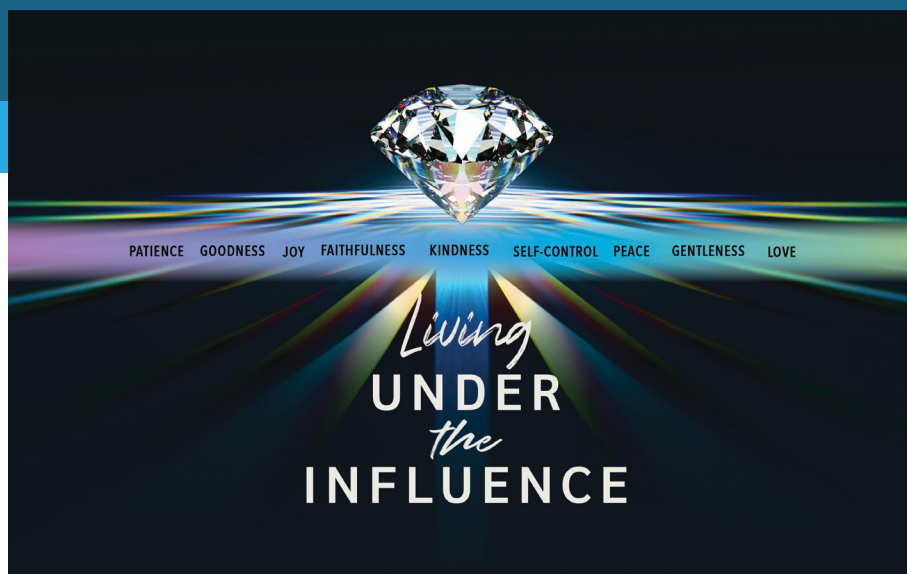


DAILY DEVOTIONAL

A 5-Day Reflection Guide

Joy



SERMON SERIES:
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

WEEK & TOPIC:
WEEK 5 / KINDNESS

DATES:
AUGUST 3–7, 2026

This Week's Big Idea

Kindness is God's goodness in motion. It is the visible expression of God's character moving toward people with grace, truth, and love. Biblical kindness doesn't simply make people feel better—it lovingly leads people toward wholeness in Christ. As we remain under the influence of the Holy Spirit, His kindness begins to flow through us, revealing Jesus to the world.

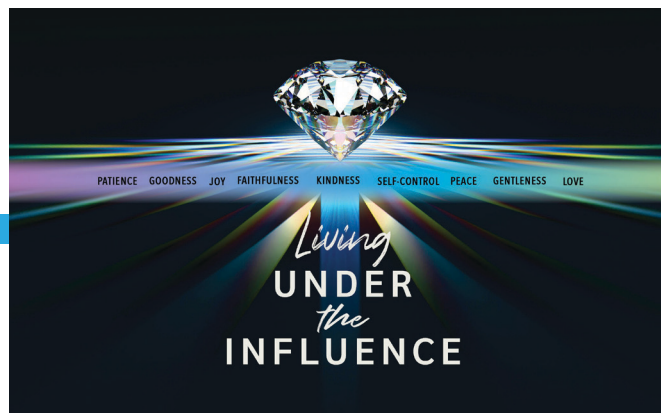
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Day 1: The One Who Planted the Tree

TODAYS SCRIPTURE

Galatians 5:22–23 (NLT) “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness...”

Romans 2:4 (NIV) “Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”



TODAY'S SEED

One of the greatest challenges in reading the Bible is that we often assume biblical words mean what they mean in today's culture. The problem is that language changes, words evolve, and meanings shift. If we're not careful, we'll begin reading modern definitions into ancient truth.

Think about a few words that have changed over time. The word tolerance used to mean respecting someone's right to hold a different opinion. Today, many people hear it as complete agreement or affirmation. Even the word nice has changed dramatically throughout history. Words change because culture changes. But God's Word doesn't.

This week we come to the fruit of kindness. Ask ten people what kindness

means, and you'll probably hear ten different answers. “Be nice.” “Don't offend anyone.” “Be polite.” “Keep your opinions to yourself.” Those ideas may contain pieces of kindness, but they don't tell the whole story.

As we've discovered throughout this series, the One who planted the tree gets to define the fruit. The fruit of the Spirit doesn't belong to culture, it came from God, and that means only God has the authority to define what biblical kindness actually is.

The Greek word Paul uses is *chr̥stotēs*. It describes goodness expressed in action. It speaks of someone who actively seeks another person's good through generosity, compassion, grace, and practical care. It is not merely appearing pleasant—it is goodness

moving toward someone else.

Biblical kindness isn't simply about avoiding conflict or making people feel comfortable. It is about loving people enough to seek what is genuinely best for them. Paul says in Romans that God's kindness leads us to repentance. His kindness has a purpose, a direction, and ultimately a destination. God doesn't move toward us simply to make us feel better. He moves toward us to make us new. His kindness doesn't ignore sin, it lovingly leads us out of sin.

As you begin this week, remember this: Before God ever asks us to extend kindness, He first shows us His own. Everything begins with Him.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The Greek word translated kindness is *chr̥stotēs* (χρηστότης). In the first-century Greco-Roman world, it described benevolence, generosity, and usefulness. It was often used of rulers or benefactors who used their influence and resources to improve the lives of others rather than themselves. Notice what the word does not emphasize. It is not primarily about being agreeable or avoiding difficult conversations. It is about using whatever God has entrusted to you—your words, influence, resources, position, and relationships—to seek another person's genuine good.

DON'T MISS THIS

Kindness is not weakness, it's God's goodness in motion.

TEND THE GARDEN

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting.

1. When you hear the word kindness, what definition immediately comes to your mind?
2. Have you ever confused biblical kindness with simply “being nice”?
3. Who has shown you God’s kindness in a way that helped you grow closer to Christ?

WATER THE SEED

Pay attention to your conversations today. Before you respond to someone, silently ask: “What would God’s kindness look like in this moment?” Then choose to respond under the influence of the Holy Spirit instead of your first impulse.

GROW THIS IN ME

Father,

Thank You for showing me what true kindness looks like. Thank You that You did not leave me to define truth according to my own ideas or the shifting opinions of culture. Instead, You have revealed Your heart through Your Word and through Your Son.

Forgive me for the times I have confused kindness with simply avoiding conflict or saying what people wanted to hear. Teach me to see kindness the way You do. Let Your goodness move through my words, my actions, my attitude, and my relationships.

Holy Spirit, continue producing Your fruit in my life. Help me become the kind of person who reflects the kindness of Jesus—full of grace, full of truth, and always seeking the genuine good of others. May people see Your goodness flowing through me and be drawn closer to You.

In Jesus’ name,

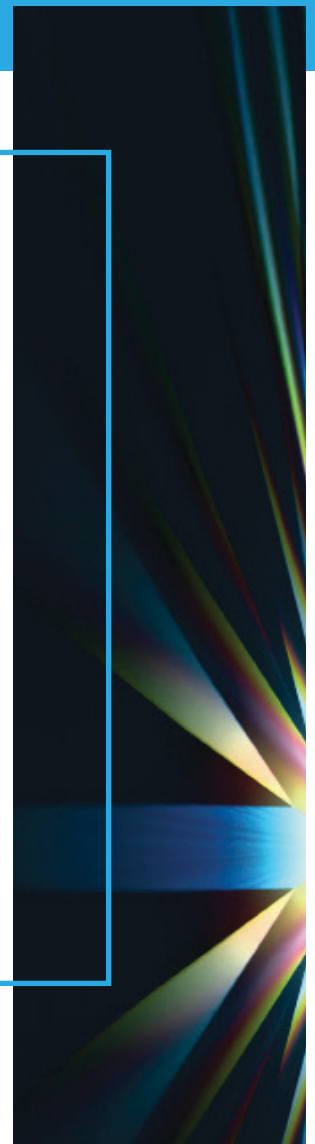
Amen.

**GOD PRODUCES THE FRUIT. WE CREATE THE CONDITIONS.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. STAY PLANTED. TRUST THE
PROCESS. THE FRUIT IS COMING.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Day Two – Kindness Has a Destination

God’s kindness was never meant to leave us comfortable—it was meant to lead us toward transformation. Tomorrow we’ll discover that repentance isn’t God’s way of pushing us away; it’s His loving invitation to leave one current and step into another.



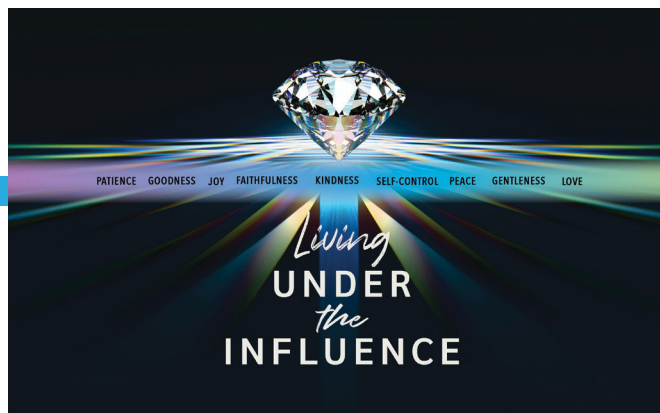
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Day 2: Kindness Has a Destination

TODAYS SCRIPTURE

Romans 2:4 (NIV) “Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT) “The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but



TODAY'S SEED

When most people think about repentance, they picture judgment, punishment, condemnation. But Paul gives us something entirely different, he says that it's God's kindness that leads us to repentance. Not God's power, or wrath, not even miracles, instead he says that God's kindness leads us there. That doesn't mean God lowers His standards or ignores sin. It means God's heart is always moving toward redemption. His kindness has a purpose or a destination in mind and that is repentance.

Unfortunately, repentance is another one of those biblical words that has been reshaped by culture. Many people hear the word and immediately think of shame, guilt, or someone angrily pointing a finger and shouting, “Repent!”

But the New Testament paints a much richer picture. The Greek word is metanoia, which literally means “a change of mind.” Not simply changing an opinion, or feeling sorry. Instead, repentance is allowing God to so transform the way we think so that it changes the direction of our lives.

In previous messages, we've talked about influence and currents. Before Christ, we were carried along by the current of the flesh, and its desires shaped our values our thinking and eventually our actions. But God's kindness interrupts that current, with the current of the Holy Spirit. Repentance is not just turning away from sin, it's turning toward God.

Then, as we experience His kindness and His goodness, something begins changing inside us. Our thinking, desires and priorities change in such a way that eventually our lives begin changing. This is why biblical kindness can never be separated from truth. If kindness never tells the truth, how would I ever know I needed to change? But if that truth is never delivered with kindness, how will I ever believe that God truly wants my good? God doesn't speak truth to shame us, but every correction or conviction He brings, is an expression of His kindness moving toward us. Remember that on the other side of repentance is freedom

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The word repentance comes from the Greek word metanoia (μετάνοια). It combines two ideas: meta – change or transformation and nous – the mind. Repentance is far more than feeling guilty. It is a transformation of the mind that results in a transformation of life. Throughout the New Testament, repentance is always presented as an invitation, not merely an accusation.

God doesn't expose our sin because He delights in our failure. He exposes it because He delights in our freedom.

DON'T MISS THIS

Repentance isn't the opposite of kindness, repentance is where God's kindness is leading us.

TEND THE GARDEN

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting.

1. Can you think of a time when God's kindness—not fear—drew you closer to Him?
2. Is there an area where the Holy Spirit has been gently inviting you to change your thinking or direction?
3. How might understanding repentance as God's invitation instead of His rejection change your relationship with Him?

WATER THE SEED

Ask the Holy Spirit one simple question today: "Lord, what are You trying to change in the way I think?" Write down whatever comes to mind, then take one practical step toward obedience. Remember, repentance is not simply agreeing with God. It is allowing His truth to redirect your life.

GROW THIS IN ME

Father,

Thank You that Your kindness found me long before I ever thought about finding You. Thank You for pursuing me with grace instead of abandoning me to my sin. Your heart has never been to condemn me but to lead me into freedom. Forgive me for the times I have resisted Your gentle conviction or mistaken Your correction for rejection. Teach me to recognize Your kindness even when You are asking me to change. Transform the way I think so my life reflects Your truth more and more each day. Holy Spirit, keep leading me out of the current of the flesh and into the current of Your life. Give me a heart that responds quickly when You speak and trusts that every step of obedience is leading me closer to the freedom You desire for me.

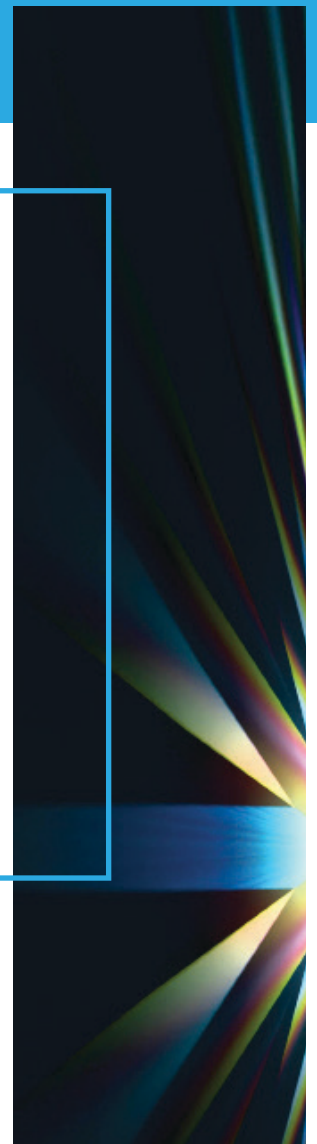
In Jesus' name, Amen.

**GOD PRODUCES THE FRUIT. WE CREATE THE CONDITIONS.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. STAY PLANTED. TRUST THE
PROCESS. THE FRUIT IS COMING.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Day Three – Grace and Truth

Jesus never chose between grace and truth—He perfectly embodied both. Tomorrow we'll see how His example redefines biblical kindness and teaches us how to love people without compromising truth.



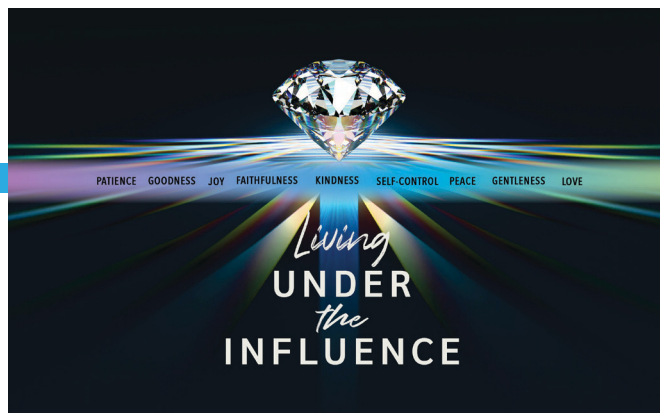
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Day 3: Grace and Truth

TODAYS SCRIPTURE

John 1:14 (NLT). “So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.” (Other translations say “full of grace and truth.”)

John 8:10–11 (NLT) *”Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, ‘Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?’ ‘No, Lord,’ she said. And Jesus



TODAY'S SEED

How would you describe Jesus in one sentence, what would you say? Compassionate? Powerful? Merciful? Holy? Every one of those would be true. But John chooses two words that perfectly capture His heart. Grace and truth. Jesus never sacrificed one to preserve the other.

He embodied both perfectly.

We've probably all run into someone who isn't afraid to speak truth, they almost seem to enjoy confronting and correcting people. But without kindness, truth can become harsh. And then there are others who naturally lean toward grace, they bring encouragement and comfort, but they

avoid difficult conversations because they don't want to hurt anyone. But without truth, grace can become incomplete. It may feel loving in the moment, but it leaves people trapped in the very thing that's hurting them. Jesus never forced people to choose between grace and truth, instead He brought both.

One of the clearest examples is the woman caught in adultery. The religious leaders were looking for a way to trap Jesus. Instead, Jesus exposed their own hearts before addressing the woman. We love the part where He looked at the woman and said, “Neither do I condemn you.”

We love grace, but He didn't stop there. “Go and sin no more.” Notice the order. Jesus met her with grace before He challenged her with truth. His kindness opened her heart and then truth pointed her toward freedom.

As followers of Christ, we're called to reflect His character. When people encounter us, they should experience both the compassion of heaven and the truth that sets them free. The Holy Spirit isn't producing people who are merely “nice.” He's producing people who look like Jesus, full of grace and full of truth.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

John describes Jesus as being full of grace (charis) and truth (aletheia). Grace is God's undeserved favor and generosity toward us. Truth is God's reality revealed. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus never treated these as competing ideas. Grace welcomed people. Truth transformed people. One without the other leaves the Gospel incomplete.

DON'T MISS THIS

Truth without kindness wounds. Kindness without truth leaves people wounded. Jesus held both perfectly.

TEND THE GARDEN

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting.

1. Do you naturally lean more toward grace or toward truth?
2. Why do you think that is?
3. Has someone ever spoken hard truth to you in a way that reflected genuine kindness?
4. How can you better reflect both grace and truth in your relationships this week?

WATER THE SEED

Before an important conversation today, pause and pray: “Holy Spirit, help my words sound like Jesus.” Ask Him to fill your heart with grace and your mouth with truth so that everything you say reflects His kindness.

GROW THIS IN ME

Father,

Thank You for showing me what true kindness looks like through Jesus. He never compromised truth, and He never withheld grace. Thank You that when I deserved condemnation, You met me with mercy and invited me into a new life. Holy Spirit, help me reflect the character of Christ. Keep me from speaking truth without love or offering kindness without courage. Let my words build people up, point them toward You, and reflect both Your compassion and Your holiness.

May my life reveal Jesus so clearly that people experience Your grace and Your truth every time they encounter me.

In Jesus' name,

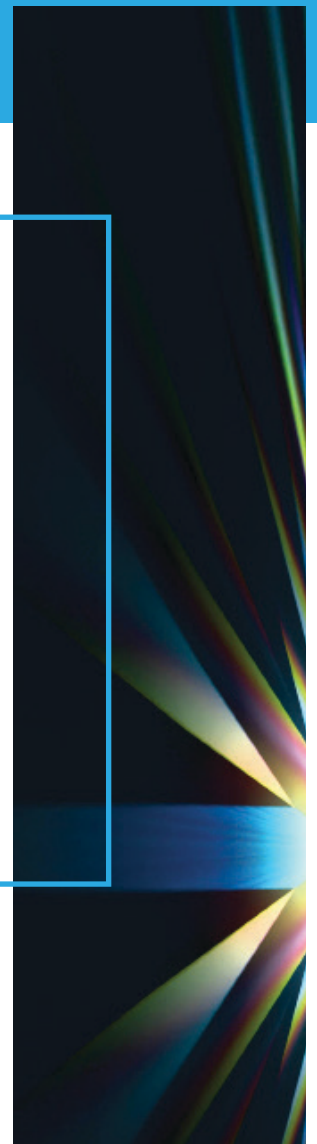
Amen.

**GOD PRODUCES THE FRUIT. WE CREATE THE CONDITIONS.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. STAY PLANTED. TRUST THE
PROCESS. THE FRUIT IS COMING.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Day Four – A Living Letter

The world isn't just listening to what Christians say—it's watching how Christians live. Tomorrow we'll discover how our lives become living letters that reveal the kindness and character of Jesus to everyone around us.



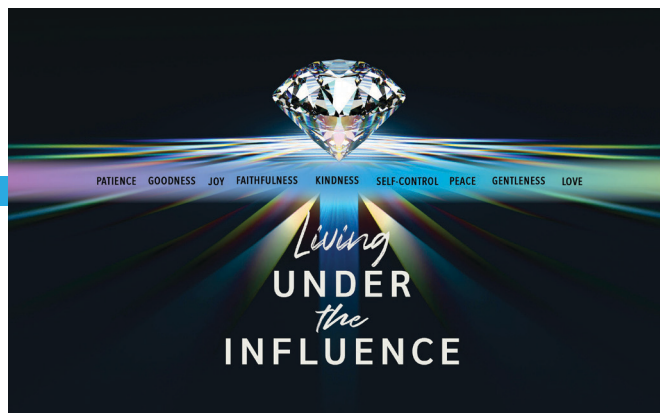
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Day 4: A Living Letter

TODAYS SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 3:2–3 (NLT) “The only letter of recommendation we need is you yourselves. Your lives are a letter written in our hearts; everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you. Clearly, you are a letter from Christ...”

Matthew 5:16 (NLT) “Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”



TODAY'S SEED

There's something different about receiving a handwritten letter rather than an email or text isn't there? The handwriting, personality, all of the words and you can almost feel the person behind the page.

That's how Paul says our lives are supposed to be. We are to be living letters, not written with ink, or paper. Paul's point was that long before many people ever open a Bible, they are reading the lives of those who claim to follow Jesus. And believe it or not our family, coworkers and our neighbors all are reading us.

That can feel like a heavy responsibility until we remember something important, we're not writing the letter, The Holy Spirit is. Paul says we are letters from Christ, He is the Author, we are the page. Every time we respond with patience instead of frustration... or when we choose goodness over selfishness...it's like The Holy Spirit is writing another line of Christ's character into our lives.

And today kindness is to become part of the story people read when they encounter us. A kind word, or a listening ear, maybe in a quiet act of

service. None of those things seem heroic or extraordinary, but each one can become another sentence in the letter Christ is writing through your life.

Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others...” The goal wasn't that people would think highly of us, the goal is that people would glorify our Father in heaven. When people encounter genuine biblical kindness, they should leave thinking, “There was something different about that person.”

Every act of kindness becomes another opportunity for people to catch a glimpse of Christ.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The phrase “letter from Christ” comes from the Greek word *epistolē*, meaning an official letter or message delivered from one person to another. Paul's point is remarkable. Believers are not merely carriers of the Gospel. We are part of God's message to the world. People should be able to “read” the character of Christ simply by watching how we live. Kindness becomes one of the clearest sentences in that letter.

DON'T MISS THIS

People may never read the pages of your Bible. But they read the pages of your life every day.

The Holy Spirit is writing the character of Jesus into you so

TEND THE GARDEN

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting.

1. If someone “read” your life this week, what would they learn about Jesus?
2. Who has been a living example of Christ’s kindness in your life?
3. Is there someone around you who needs to experience God’s kindness today?
4. What chapter is the Holy Spirit writing in your life right now?

WATER THE SEED

Choose one intentional act of kindness today that no one else will likely notice. Don’t do it for recognition. Do it as an act of worship. Let someone else experience the kindness of Jesus through you.

GROW THIS IN ME

Father,

Thank You for inviting me to be a living letter that points people to Jesus. I know my life is constantly being read by others, and I want what they see to reflect Your character instead of my own. Holy Spirit, continue writing Your story in me. Shape my attitudes, my words, and my actions so they reveal the kindness of Christ. Help me notice the people You place in my path each day and give me the courage to love them well. May my life become a testimony that draws people to You. Let every act of kindness become another opportunity for someone to see Your goodness and glorify You.

In Jesus’ name,

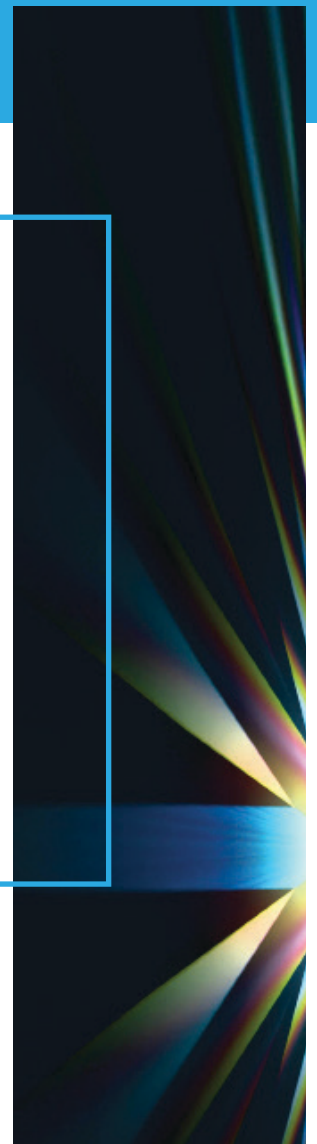
Amen.

***GOD PRODUCES THE FRUIT. WE CREATE THE CONDITIONS.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. STAY PLANTED. TRUST THE
PROCESS. THE FRUIT IS COMING.***

LOOKING AHEAD

Day Five – Become the Current

The Holy Spirit never produces fruit simply for us to enjoy—it is meant to flow through us and influence others. Tomorrow we’ll bring this week together and discover how one life filled with God’s kindness can create a current that draws people toward Christ.



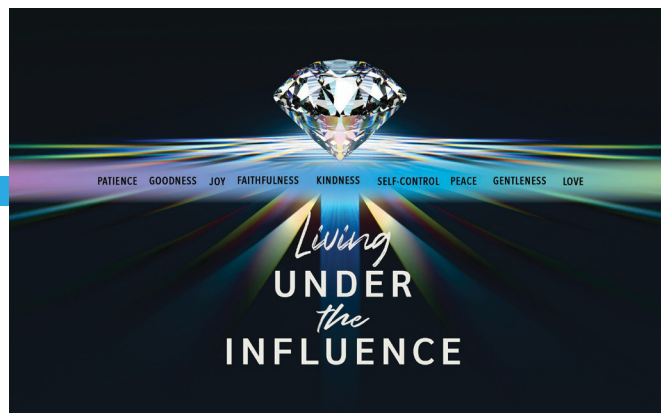
LIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Day 5: **Become the Current**

TODAYS SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:16 (NLT) “In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

Galatians 5:22–23 (NLT) “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control...”



TODAY'S SEED

This week we've discovered that kindness is much more than simply "being nice." We've let God define kindness, and we've discovered that His kindness always leads somewhere. It leads to repentance which Jesus perfectly demonstrated through grace and truth.

Now the question becomes: What will you do with it? When Jesus described His followers, He didn't say they would simply believe the truth. He said they would become light. Light doesn't argue with darkness, it simply shines. Wherever it shines, darkness has to leave, and kindness works the same way. One act of kindness may seem small. A word of encouragement or a patient response, a listening ear or a

quiet act of generosity. By themselves, those moments may not seem significant. But kindness has a way of multiplying. One act inspires another.

As one life surrenders to the Holy Spirit another life is being influenced. Before long, what began as one person's obedience becomes a current that carries many others along with it. That's exactly what we've been talking about throughout this series. Every life is creating a current.

The question has never been whether you're influencing people. The question is what kind of influence are you creating. Kindness is where the fruit becomes visible, it's where people begin experiencing the character of

Christ through ordinary believers. You may never preach a sermon, or be on a stage, but every day you have opportunities to let someone experience Jesus through the way you treat them.

A simple act of kindness may become someone's first glimpse of Jesus. It may restore hope.

It may heal a relationship. It may soften a heart that has been hardened for years. It may begin a conversation that changes an eternity. You may never know this side of heaven how far one act of kindness traveled, only God does.

So today, don't simply admire the fruit, carry it and become the current.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The fruit of the Spirit was never intended to remain private. Throughout Scripture, God's blessings always moved outward. He blessed Abraham so all nations would be blessed through him (Genesis 12:2–3). Jesus called His followers the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).

The Holy Spirit produces fruit in us so others can experience Christ through us. The fruit isn't the destination. It's the evidence of the Spirit's work flowing through our lives into the lives of others.

DON'T MISS THIS

Goodness is the source. Kindness is the current.

TEND THE GARDEN

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting.

1. Which truth about kindness challenged you the most this week?
2. Where have you seen God's kindness changing your own heart?
3. Who in your life needs to experience the kindness of Christ through you this week?

WATER THE SEED

Today, ask the Holy Spirit to interrupt your schedule. Instead of looking for a planned opportunity, watch for an unexpected one. Offer encouragement. Extend forgiveness. Show patience. Meet a need. Speak truth with grace. Then trust God to use that simple act of kindness in ways you'll probably never see.

GROW THIS IN ME

Father,

Thank You for Your incredible kindness toward me. Long before I ever reached for You, You reached for me. Your kindness changed my heart, transformed my thinking, and continues to shape my life every day. Holy Spirit, let the fruit You've been growing in me become visible to the people around me. Help me carry Your goodness into every conversation, every relationship, and every opportunity You place before me. May my kindness never point people to me but always lead them to Jesus. Use my life to create a current that draws people toward hope, healing, truth, and Your love. May those who encounter me leave having experienced a little more of Christ because Your Spirit is alive within me.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

**GOD PRODUCES THE FRUIT. WE CREATE THE CONDITIONS.
STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. STAY PLANTED. TRUST THE
PROCESS. THE FRUIT IS COMING.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Next Week's Big Idea

Self-control isn't about trying harder or relying on greater willpower. It is the fruit of a life surrendered to the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is in control, our words, emotions, desires, and decisions begin to reflect His character instead of our impulses. Join us next Sunday as we continue our journey through the Fruit of the Spirit.

