

## Lesson 43 - The Character of Kindness

1. What is the relationship between a real man and kindness? **Proverbs 19:22**

**EGW:** Those who keep in a prayerful frame of mind will be able to speak a word in season to those who are brought within the sphere of their influence; for God will give wisdom whereby they may serve the Lord Jesus. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." Proverbs 2:10, 11. You will open your mouth with wisdom, and in your tongue will be the law of kindness. {6T 69.4}

2. Where does kindness come from? **2 Corinthians 6:6**

**EGW:** "I have fought a good fight," Paul declared. His words to the Corinthians describe the conflict that he endured: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." {ST, August 30, 1905 par. 4}

Not all who enter the army can be generals, captains, sergeants, or even corporals. Not all are called to bear the care and responsibility of leaders. There is hard work of other kinds to be done. While there are but few officers, it requires many soldiers to form the rank and file of the army; and its success depends upon the fidelity of every soldier. {ST, August 30, 1905 par. 5}

An army would be demoralized if the soldiers did not obey the orders of the leader. They must act in concert. Union is strength; without union efforts are meaningless. Whatever excellent qualities a soldier may possess, he can not be safe and trustworthy if he claims a right to act independently of his fellow comrades. This independent action can not be maintained in the service of Christ. The soldiers of the cross must move in concert. {ST, August 30, 1905 par. 6}

He who enters Christ's army must obey His orders. He has placed himself under the Saviour's leadership, and he is to give Him willing obedience. He is to speak no word, perform no act, that would misrepresent the high and holy principles by which the kingdom of heaven is to be governed. {ST, August 30, 1905 par. 7}

3. What can we do towards the Holy Spirit if we are not kind, among the other traits of character?  
**Ephesians 4:30-32**

**EGW:** How does Heaven look upon human agents who are void of the milk of human kindness? "Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. . . . Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Could a more powerful appeal be made? {SSW, January 1, 1896 par. 3}

We are counseled to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth; but a corrupt communication is not simply something that is vile and vulgar. It is any communication that will shut from the mind the view of Christ, that will blot from the soul true sympathy and love. It is a communication in which the love of Christ is not expressed, but rather sentiments of an unchristlike character. It is that which brings oppression upon men, women, youth, and children, for whom Christ has given his life. It is in the decisions that are formulated against those who need help, and who will perish if they are left to die. {SSW, January 1, 1896 par. 4}

4. In Peter's ladder, kindness is the second to the last rung, so what follows kindness, implying that without kindness, we cannot achieve it? **2 Peter 1:7, 1 Corinthians 13:4**

**EGW:** Through His inspired apostle, Christ has shown us what the character will be when imbued with the love of Christ. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." This example is given us that we may know the heights we may reach in and through Christ. The standard He presents is perfection, and through His merits we may attain to this. We come short because we are content to look at earthly things rather than at heavenly. {ST, April 25, 1900 par. 5}

5. What is another way of saying the word "charity"? **Romans 12:10**

**EGW:** The great lesson which Jesus taught on these occasions is thus expressed by the apostle Paul: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." The disciples were in a school in which Christ was teacher; and those who were willing to see their own defects, and were anxious to improve in character, had ample opportunity. They were constantly receiving line upon line, precept upon precept, showing them that meekness, humility, and love were essential to growth in grace, and to a fitness for the work upon which they were soon to enter. {ST, January 15, 1885 par. 10}

6. What did the expression of kindness shown towards Mephibosheth, son of Johnathan, show that David and Johnathan had? **2 Samuel 9:6-7, 1 Samuel 18:1**

**EGW:** David, in his covenant with Jonathan, had promised that when he should have rest from his enemies he would show kindness to the house of Saul. In his prosperity, mindful of this covenant, the king made inquiry, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" He was told of a son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, who had been lame from childhood. At the time of Saul's defeat by the Philistines at Jezreel, the nurse of this child, attempting to flee with him, had let him fall, thus making him a lifelong cripple. David now summoned the young man to court and received him with great kindness. The private possessions of Saul were restored to him for the support of his household; but the son of Jonathan was himself to be the constant guest of the king, sitting daily at the royal table. Through reports from the enemies of David, Mephibosheth had been led to cherish a strong prejudice against him as a usurper; but the monarch's generous and courteous reception of him and his continued kindness won the heart of the young man; he became strongly attached to David, and, like his father Jonathan, he felt that his interest was one with that of the king whom God had chosen. {PP 713.1}

7. When we "put on" the list of character traits, of which kindness happens to be part of, what are we considered? **Colossians 3:12-13 [Answer at the beginning of 12]**

**EGW:** Every man, woman, and youth has an influence upon others. This influence we have from God. It flows from God to the human agent, and we are responsible for its use. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity (love), which is the bond of perfectness." Will we consider that this pure, unselfish love, one toward another, is the bond of perfectness in character? "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace

in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him. {1888 1509.2}

8. How much kindness did a group of strangers show Paul and company, implying that if strangers can show that much, what of God's people? **Acts 28:2**

**EGW:** During the three months that the ship's company remained at Melita, Paul and his fellow laborers improved many opportunities to preach the gospel. In a remarkable manner the Lord wrought through them. For Paul's sake the entire shipwrecked company were treated with great kindness; all their wants were supplied, and upon leaving Melita they were liberally provided with everything needful for their voyage. The chief incidents of their stay are thus briefly related by Luke: {AA 446.1}

9. Who is our example having the character trait of kindness? **Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2**

**EGW:** God has honored us by showing how greatly he values us. We are bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God. When his heritage shall conscientiously follow the word of the Lord, his blessing will rest upon them in answer to their prayers. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him? . . . Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed." {RH, February 9, 1897 par. 14}

10. Through what means did God the Father show kindness towards us? **Ephesians 2:7**

**EGW:** The plan of redemption was arranged in the councils between the Father and the Son. Then Christ pledged himself to render an account for man if he proved disloyal. He pledged himself to make an atonement which would unite every believing soul to God. He who lays his sins upon the substitute and surety, thus becoming a partaker of the divine nature, can unite with the apostle in saying: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places." "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." In his infinite love Christ devised the plan of salvation. This plan he stands ready to fulfil in behalf of all who will co-operate with him. In

their behalf he says to the Father, Do not impute their sins to them, but lay them on me. Be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities remember no more. They have accepted my merits, and made peace with me; and they shall make peace with me. My righteousness is theirs, and for my sake bless them with all spiritual blessings. {RH, May 28, 1908 par. 12}

11. What body part is important to show kindness with? **Proverbs 31:26**

**EGW:** "A prudent wife is from the Lord." "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. . . . She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her," saying, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." He who gains such a wife "findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." {AH 46.1}

Here are things which should be considered: Will the one you marry bring happiness to your home? Is [she] an economist, or will she, if married, not only use all her own earnings, but all of yours to gratify a vanity, a love of appearance? Are her principles correct in this direction? Has she anything now to depend upon? . . . I know that to the mind of a man infatuated with love and thoughts of marriage these questions will be brushed away as though they were of no consequence. But these things should be duly considered, for they have a bearing upon your future life. . . . {AH 46.2}

In your choice of a wife study her character. Will she be one who will be patient and painstaking? Or will she cease to care for your mother and father at the very time when they need a strong son to lean upon? And will she withdraw him from their society to carry out her plans and to suit her own pleasure, and leave the father and mother who, instead of gaining an affectionate daughter, will have lost a son? {AH 46.3}

12. What is treated as kindness when a righteous person performs out of the concern for that person's soul? **Psalms 141:5**

**EGW:** A consecrated Christian life is ever shedding light and comfort and peace. It is purity, tact, simplicity, and usefulness. It is controlled by that unselfish love that sanctifies the influence. It is full of Christ, and leaves a track of light wherever its possessor may go. Abigail was a wise reprover and counselor. David's passion died away under the power of her influence and reasoning. He was convinced that he had taken an unwise course, and had lost control of his own Spirit. He received the rebuke with humility of heart, in harmony with his own words, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil." He gave thanks and blessing because she advised him righteously. {ST, October 26, 1888 par. 8}

There are many who, when they are reprov'd or advis'd, think it praiseworthy if they receive the rebuke without becoming impatient. But how few take reproof with gratitude of heart, and bless those who seek to save them from pursuing an evil course. {ST, October 26, 1888 par. 9}

13. In copying God's character of merciful kindness, what should it bring to a person? **Psalms 119:76**

**EGW:** What Christ was on this earth, the Christian worker should strive to be. He is our example, not only in His spotless purity, but in His patience, gentleness, and winsomeness of disposition. His life is an illustration of true courtesy. He had ever a kind look and a word of comfort for the needy and the oppressed. His presence brought a purer atmosphere into the home. His life was as leaven working amid the elements of society. Pure and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous; among unjust publicans, unrighteous Samaritans, heathen soldiers, rough peasants, and the mixed multitude. He spoke a word of sympathy here and a word there. As He saw men weary, and compelled to bear heavy burdens, He shared their burdens, and repeated to them the lessons He had learned from nature, of the love, the kindness, the goodness of God. He sought to inspire with hope the most rough and unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might attain such a character as would make them manifest as children of God. {GW 121.2}

14. As exemplified in David, what can kindness received from another lead the recipient of that kindness to do? **1 Chronicles 19:2**

**EGW:** Tidings were received at Jerusalem announcing the death of Nahash, king of the Ammonites-- a monarch who had shown kindness to David when he was a fugitive from the rage of Saul. Now, desiring to express his grateful appreciation of the favor shown him in his distress, David sent ambassadors with a message of sympathy to Hanun, the son and successor of the Ammonite king. "Said David, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me." {PP 714.1}

But his courteous act was misinterpreted. The Ammonites hated the true God and were the bitter enemies of Israel. The apparent kindness of Nahash to David had been prompted wholly by hostility to Saul as king of Israel. The message of David was misconstrued by Hanun's counselors. They "said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?" It was by the advice of his counselors that Nahash, half a century before, had been led to make the cruel condition required of the people of Jabesh-gilead, when, besieged by the Ammonites, they sued for a covenant of peace. Nahash had demanded the privilege of thrusting out all their right eyes. The Ammonites still vividly remembered how the king of Israel had foiled their

cruel design, and had rescued the people whom they would have humbled and mutilated. The same hatred of Israel still prompted them. They could have no conception of the generous spirit that had inspired David's message. When Satan controls the minds of men he will excite envy and suspicion which will misconstrue the very best intentions. Listening to his counselors, Hanun regarded David's messengers as spies, and loaded them with scorn and insult. {PP 714.2}

The Ammonites had been permitted to carry out the evil purposes of their hearts without restraint, that their real character might be revealed to David. It was not God's will that Israel should enter into a league with this treacherous heathen people. {PP 714.3}

15. Who is famously known for showing great kindness while originally being a pagan? **Ruth 3:9-10**

**EGW:** (no comment)

16. Who dealt kindly towards others that greatly mistreated them? **Genesis 50:19-21**

**EGW:** After the death of Jacob, Joseph's brethren were filled with gloom and distress. They thought that Joseph had concealed his resentment, out of respect for their father; and now that he was dead, he would be revenged for the ill treatment he had suffered at their hands. "And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil; and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not; for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not; I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them." {1SP 156.2}

17. Even though this is referring to a nation, at what age should kindness start being exercised in people? **Jeremiah 2:2**

**EGW:** In every home there is missionary work to be done; for the children in every family are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Evil propensities are to be controlled, evil

tempers subdued, and the children are to be instructed that they are the Lord's property, bought with his own precious blood, and that they cannot live a life of pleasure and vanity, have their own will and carry out their own ideas, and yet be numbered among the children of God. The children are to be instructed with kindness and patience. They are to be taught, line upon line and precept upon precept, the requirements of a holy God. Let the parents teach them of the love of God in such a way that it will be a pleasant theme in the family circle, and let the church take upon them the responsibility of feeding the lambs as well as the sheep of the flock. Let the church take a special care of the lambs of the flock, exerting every influence in their power to win the love of the children, and to bind them to the truth. Ministers and church-members should second the efforts of parents to lead the children into safe paths. The Lord is calling for the youth; for he would make them his helpers to do good service under his banner. {RH, October 25, 1892 par. 5}

18. How long does God show His kindness towards us? **Isaiah 54:8**

**EGW:** Christ is the friend of sinners. When the scribes and the Pharisees accused him of eating with publicans and sinners, Jesus said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If you feel yourself to be the greatest of sinners, then Christ is just what you need; for he is the greatest of Saviours. Lift up your head, and look away from yourself, away from the poisoned wound of the serpent, to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. What will all your groaning and the torturing of your soul avail? You may entertain thoughts that condemn you, but in them there is no salvation. Put away your thoughts, and receive the thoughts of God, through which your mind may be elevated, your soul purified and uplifted. The Lord says: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Why will you carry your burden of sin, when Christ has come to be your burden bearer? Roll your sins at the foot of the cross. Unload! unload! He takes away the sins of the world. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." {ST, April 9, 1894 par. 5}

19. What type of kindness does God show towards us? **Psalms 117:2**

**EGW:** The Lord's merciful kindness is great toward us. He will never leave nor forsake those who trust in Him. If we would think and talk less of our trials, and more of the mercy and goodness of God, we would find ourselves raised above much of our gloom and perplexity. My brethren and sisters, you who feel that you are entering upon a dark path, and like the captives in Babylon must hang your harps upon the willows, let us make trial of cheerful song. You may say, How can I sing, with this dark prospect before me, with this burden of sorrow and bereavement upon my soul? But have earthly sorrows deprived us of the all-powerful Friend we have in Jesus? Should not the

marvelous love of God in the gift of His dear Son be a theme of continual rejoicing? When we bring our petitions to the throne of grace, let us not forget to offer also anthems of thanksgiving. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me" (Psalm 50:23). As long as our Saviour lives, we have cause for unceasing gratitude and praise.--The Review and Herald, Nov. 1, 1881. {2SM 268.3}

20. What is God's kindness towards us compared to? **Psalms 31:21**

**EGW:** Jehovah is the name given to Christ. "Behold, God is my salvation," writes the prophet Isaiah; "I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day ye shall say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted." "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." {ST, May 3, 1899 par. 18}