



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting **every man** perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XII
Issue 290

Divine Justice and Grace

by – Steve McVey

What kind of justice does our God dispense in the world? Is He the Cosmic Hanging Judge of the Universe Who sits on His divine courtroom bench, gavel in hand, ready to slam it down and scream guilty? ... Not at all.

Ironically, the God-as-Judge viewpoint does not present a biblical picture of what divine justice is about at all, but is a legalistic perspective that comes from human culture. Biblically, to “bring justice” does not mean to bring punishment, but to bring healing and reconciliation. Justice means to make things right. Throughout the Prophets justice is associated with caring for others, as something that is not in conflict with mercy, but rather an expression of it. Divine justice is God’s saving action at work for all that are oppressed, as the following verses demonstrate:

Learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow (Isaiah 1:17).

Note what happens when one does right by seeking justice. The oppressed are encouraged and the helpless are helped.

This is what the LORD says: “Administer justice every morning; rescue from the hand of his oppressor the one who has been robbed” (Jeremiah 21:12).

Justice is done when the oppressed is rescued.

This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Administer true justice: show mercy and compassion to one another” (Zechariah 7:9).

How does one administer true justice? By showing mercy and compassion to everybody involved.

Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; He rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice (Isaiah 30:18).



What is the reason our Lord wants to be gracious to us? Because He is Just.

If we want to understand the concept of justice as the writers of the Old Testament did, then we must see it as a “setting things right again.” There is no conflict between God’s justice and His mercy. They both flow from His love.

The justice that Jesus ushers in, the righteousness He brings, have to do with God pouring out His love on us, with God showing His compassion toward us. They have to do with God meeting us in our need and liberating us from sin and oppression. “Setting things right” is what biblical justice is about. There is no dichotomy between a “God of justice” in the Old Testament and a “God of mercy” in the New. There is no split in God’s character. God has always been a compassionate God, a God of love. Jesus reveals Who God is and Who God has always been. Justice is about mercy. Justice comes through mercy and always has.

Our God is just in forgiving your sins and giving you His nature because He has righted the wrong done by Adam. The key issue in the Father’s justice wasn’t somebody being paid back for sin; His justice was in the fact that He gave back what had been lost by Adam’s fall. Justice is God’s grace at work in love.

— Grace Walk

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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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What Is Punishment?

by – A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

“Punishment” is a word I have come to hate, for men have so fearfully misused it of God’s operations. Once we see that all of God’s dealings are with a view to the eventual **reconciliation of all**, the idea of punitive retribution, introduced by corrupt theology, will become abhorrent. We must remember that the object of all of **God’s operations are rooted in love** and fruited in reconciliation. If God is love, He cannot be orthodox. Before there can be a universal reconciliation, each one must be set right with God, and this is accomplished at the judging. Such indeed is the true meaning of judgment.



All will be condemned and all will be justified (Romans 5:18). Before they can be justified they **must realize their condemnation**. Sin seeks to work in secret. Motives behind men’s acts are hidden. Men pay more attention to outward appearance than to inward reality. In the judging this will be reversed. Everything that is now covered shall be revealed (Matthew 10:26; Mark 4:22). This will probably reverse many a human judgment automatically, without any tedious investigations or any attempts to evade or distort the open evidence. To my mind this, though painful, will be most wholesome for all concerned, and is absolutely essential to their future welfare. Once we see that judging is the necessary preparation for reconciliation, we will not only bear with it, we will be thankful for it, and praise God for this provision.

The Problem of Evil
Pages 231-236

The orthodox “hell” completely nullifies all judging and justice. What is the sense of bringing anyone before a judge (at the Great White Throne) if he has already been suffering torment for a thousand years, and is due to undergo the same eternally, no matter what his sentence is? Justice demands that **the sentence suit the crime**. This is impossible if the term is infinite. Moreover it is highly immoral to torment anyone without some useful end. A man who would be guilty of such a thing would be adjudged mad, and confined to an asylum.

Drawing All Men

by – J. Preston Eby

*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all men unto me* (John 12:32).

The truth of the supernatural and all-powerful drawing of God is one of the most neglected of all of the great truths of God’s Word, and yet it is one of the most important. The words translated “draw” and “drew” in the Greek New Testament are *helkuō* and *helkō*. Each of these words has the basic meaning of “compel,” “draw,” “pull” and “tug.” In most instances the force which does the drawing or compelling is sufficient to cause the object of the drawing to respond fully.



place of judgment!

It is with precisely this kind of forceful drawing about which the Lord Jesus is talking when He says,

*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all men unto me!*

When the apostle James wishes to describe the manner in which rich men forcibly drag those who are indebted to them to prison, he uses the word *helkō*. In James 2:6 he writes,

*Do not rich men oppress you and **draw** you before the judgment seats?*

This “drawing,” of course, was not with wooing or pleading! It was an act of force that absolutely took no care of the willingness of the person drawn! The poor man might resist ever so much, and he might cry and plead, but he was drawn irresistibly to the

Thank God, they are not just drawn *toward* Him, but “*unto*” Him – all the way! Because the Christ was “*lifted up*” on Calvary, dying on behalf of every man of Adam’s race, the promise is sure that He will inexorably **draw** all men unto Himself! The divine plan calls for the Church, the Body of Christ, to be drawn to Him in this age, all the living nations of the world to be drawn to Him in the next age, and the remainder of men, all who have ever lived and died upon this planet in the ages to come.

The Kingdom of Heaven

And Its Relationship with the Kingdom of God

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Editor

The DEFINITION

The English word “kingdom” comes from two separate words which are compressed into one word: king’s domain, or king’s dominion ... To put it simply, it is a domain ... realm or sphere ... that is dominated by a ruler. — Dusty Rhoades, *Paul and the Kingdom of God* (p. 19)



The *Kingdom of Heaven* is the Kingdom predicted in (what we Christians now call) the Old Testament Scriptures; the Kingdom to be brought in by Israel’s Messiah. — J. Sidlow Baxter, *The Strategic Grasp of the Bible* (p. 236)

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The DISTINCTION

The *Kingdom of God* is to be distinguished from the *Kingdom of Heaven* ... the *Kingdom of God* is universal, including all ... while the *Kingdom [of Heaven]* is Messianic, mediatorial, and Davidic, and has for its object the establishment of the *Kingdom of God* IN THE EARTH (Matthew 3:2) ... the *Kingdom of Heaven* is in the EARTHLY SPHERE of the UNIVERSAL *Kingdom of God* ... — *Scofield Reference Bible* (p. 1003, note 1)

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The phrase, “*Kingdom of Heaven*” ... signifies the Messianic earthly rule of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. It is called “*the Kingdom of Heaven*” because it is the rule of the HEAVEN OVER THE EARTH (Matthew 6:10). The phrase is derived from Daniel, where it is defined (Daniel 2:34-35, 44; 7:23-27) as the Kingdom which “*the God of Heaven*” will set up after the destruction by the “*stone cut out without hands*” of the Gentile world-system. It is the Kingdom covenanted to David’s seed (II Samuel 7:7-12), described in the prophets (Zechariah 12:8) and confirmed to Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, through the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:32-33). — *Scofield Reference Bible* (p. 996, note 1)

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The *Kingdom of Heaven*. This kingdom will be the fulfillment of the prayer “*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven*” (Matthew 6:10). It will be the realization of the promise of Deuteronomy 11:21, “*the days of heaven upon the earth.*” — Charles Welch, *An Alphabetical Analysis* (p. 231).

+ + + + +

1. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 10, 19-20; 7:21; 8:11; 10:7; 11:11-12; 13:11, 24, 31, 33, 44-45, 47, 52; 16:19; 18:1, 3-4, 23; 19:12, 14, 23; 20:1; 22:2; 23:13; 25:1, 14).

These are all of the passages in the Bible where this expression, “*the Kingdom of Heaven*,” is found. It is noticeable that all of these references are found in Matthew. The reason for this fact is that this gospel [of Matthew] presents Christ as King ...

It is a dispensational term and refers to the Messiah’s Kingdom of the Earth. It is not from or out of this world. The sovereignty comes from Heaven, because the King is from there (John 18:36). It was to this end He was born, and this was the first subject of His ministry (Matthew 3:2; 4:17) ...

2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matthew 6:33; 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43; Mark 1:14-15; 4:11, 26, 30; 9:1, 47; 10:14-15, 23-25; 12:34; 14:25; 15:43; Luke 4:43; 6:20; 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27, 60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:20; 12:31; 13:18, 20, 28-29; 14:15; 16:16; 17:20-21; 18:16-17, 24-25, 29; 19:11; 21:31; 22:18, 29-30; 23:51; John 3:3, 5; Acts 1:3; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31; Romans 14:17; I Corinthians 4:20; 6:9-10; 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Colossians 4:11; II Thessalonians 1:5; Revelation 12:10).

This term, *the Kingdom of God*, means the sovereignty of God over the universe, and includes and embraces *the Kingdom of Heaven* and all other realms in the whole universe. — F. Dake, *God’s Plan for Man* (pp. 558-559)

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I. The Kingdom (or Sovereignty) of HEAVEN:

1. Has Messiah for its King;

2. It is from Heaven; and under the Heavens upon the earth;
 3. It is limited in its scope;
 4. It is political in its sphere;
 5. It is Jewish and exclusive in its character;
 6. It is national in its aspect;
 7. It is the special subject of Old Testament prophecy.
- changes. The Lord Jesus Christ is the "candidate" of genuine change. When God is ready, He will not need an election to empower His policies on earth!

II. *The Kingdom (or Sovereignty) of GOD:*

1. Has God for its Ruler;
2. It is in Heaven, over the earth;
3. It is unlimited in its scope;
4. It is moral and spiritual in its sphere;
5. It is inclusive in its character (embracing the natural and spiritual seeds of Abraham, the "heavenly calling," and the "Church" of the Mystery). Hence,
6. It is universal in its aspect;
7. It is (in its wider aspect) the subject of New Testament revelation;
8. And will be eternal in its duration."

— E.W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible* (Appendix 114)

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The Kingdom of God. This term ... may be as limited in scope as the term "*the Kingdom of Heaven*," but on the other hand it can be as universal as the sovereignty of God. There is nothing extraordinary about this double usage for we exercise the same discretion in daily conversation. Writing to one person I might say, "I live in London," but to another I might say, "I live in England." There would be no contradiction; the only thing to remember would be that "London," like the "*Kingdom of Heaven*," is more limited than "England," which is like the "*Kingdom of God*." Consequently we shall find the kingdom of God in Paul's epistles, but to jump to the conclusion that their teachings therefore "are all one and the same as that of the Gospels" would be as foolish as assuming that because I wrote to say that I lived in England, that London and Oxford were all one and the same. There are spheres in the *Kingdom of God* which the *Kingdom of Heaven* can never embrace. — Charles Welch, *An Alphabetical Analysis* (p. 232)

The DETAILS

Politicians often call for "CHANGE"; but the only true and lasting change, the only real solution to the world's problems will NOT come through the GENTILE NATIONS (Ecclesiastes 1:9-11). It is said, "The more that things change, the more they stay the same." With all of the "changes" that mankind implements, he *himself* never

A. The PEOPLE of the *Kingdom of Heaven*: ISRAEL – Genesis 17:7-8; Exodus 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 7:6; Judges 2:1; Isaiah 60:10-12; 61:5-6; Ezekiel 36:22-38; 37:21-25.

B. The EXTENT of the *Kingdom of Heaven*: ALL OF THE EARTH – Psalm 2:8; 72:11; Isaiah 11:9; 61:11; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 7:14; Zechariah 8:22; Matthew 5:5; 6:10.

C. The GOVERNMENT of the *Kingdom of Heaven*: THEOCRACY – Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:6; 24:23; 33:17, 22; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 14:9, 16; Matthew 2:1-2.

D. The CAPITAL of the *Kingdom of Heaven*: JERUSALEM – Isaiah 2:3; 24:23; Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 8:22; Revelation 21:2.

E. The POLICIES of the *Kingdom of Heaven*:

1. The DOMESTIC POLICY – Joy and Peace: Isaiah 2:4; 9:6-7; 35:10; 61:3-6; 65:19; Micah 4:3.

2. The JUDICIAL POLICY – Justice: Isaiah 11:4; Jeremiah 23:5-6.

3. The FOREIGN POLICY – Blessing or Cursing of the Gentiles: Genesis 12:2-3; 22:17-18; Deuteronomy 15:6; 28:12; Isaiah 11:10; 60:3; Zechariah 8:13, 23; 14:16-19; Acts 3:25.

4. The HEALTH CARE POLICY – Abolish Sickness: Isaiah 33:24; 35:4-6; 65:20.

5. The ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY – Restoration of the environment: Isaiah 35:1-7; 51:3 (Including the domestication of the animal kingdom – Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25).

6. The EDUCATIONAL POLICY – World class education: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Habakkuk 2:14.

7. The RELIGIOUS POLICY – State religion with a national priesthood: Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 61:6.



I LOVE my *Daily Goodies!* – **CO**

The “Interpreters of Culture” [audio] blew me away. I, like you, believe so much the things you talked about. I also love Leonard Cohen. Thank you again for your inspiring radio message. I was lifted so much by it. My spirit praises God for you and your family. – **PA**

God uses you more and more. – **India**

Your [audio] program has become like my daily bread to me. – **OH**

I just want to thank you for your helps and words you send us each day. Please know they mean more than I can say. Thank you for being yielded to God and being willing to be used of Him. – **IL**

I love those little talks [audios]. – **Netherlands**

I can’t begin to tell you how much your “labor of love” has meant to the both of us ... I’m enjoying my salvation (now!!!) – **TX**

Today’s *Daily Email Goodie* once again moved my heart. I have learned to accept my solo walk with God in the service of His Son in this, the day of man. I still find myself, at times, wanting to follow those who were in Christ before me like a little puppy dog seeking approval and a pat on the back. But now, daily, I find myself maturing more and more in my growth in Christ. Now I, like Paul, boast in the fact that the Lord stands beside me and invigorates me (II Timothy 4:17) when everyone else has forsaken me. I look forward to the day when we all will have a mutual love for one another when given our allotment in the celestial realm. – **FL**

The world needs to know about the hope for all, and you are doing a titanic job at that! – **Netherlands**

Thank you for always putting forth the joy and love of God. Your emails have regularly made my day. – **AZ**

I generally do not email people I do not know, but after reviewing your website and perusing some of the articles

I decided to write.

I have ordered your book, *The Church in Ruins*, because I perceive that you and I might be kindred spirits who share a similar journey. I was an ordained minister for many years who was deeply rooted in the “religious system.” It almost destroyed me. I have never ceased from thanking God for His kindness in delivering me from the blindness and deception of this system. My decision to leave “professional” ministry was devastating to my family, many of whom still do not understand what happened to “Pastor.” Unfortunately, I had to make the journey alone and I only hope and pray that God will similarly touch the hearts of those I love with this transforming knowledge. Hopefully, your book will be able to articulate the truth in a way that will help friends and family understand my journey. – **CT**

Thank you so much for your ministry and your diligence in the truth of God’s gospel. I’m in the process of reading your books and so far I really love what I’ve read. After 30 years of off and on bible study my oldest brother gave me a copy of *Hope beyond Hell* and I quickly recognized what I’d been missing, and suddenly I saw the big picture and it all made sense. Then I read Bob Evelyn’s book *At the End of the Ages* and then Martin Zender’s books, and now yours. Thank our Lord and Savior for Paul’s beautiful gospel. We are so blessed to be the creations of such a beautiful creator. Anyway, I just wanted to thank you and to encourage you with love as your brother in Christ. – **NC**

I really appreciate the *I Am* thoughts – such good stuff. Your introduction is precious and the accurate collection of verses to instruct and encourage for each chapter/truth stirred me again. That is a great little book dear brother. We as Body members, clothed upon in weak flesh, need to be renewed – reminded – and encouraged regularly in the identity truth. Thank you for writing it so simply and from a pure heart. – **IN**

Thank you, thank you, for these studies, Clyde, they are so revealing and releasing. – **Australia**

Every day, it seems, I become more and more in awe of how Father is using you! The way you write makes it so easy to grasp a message. Some of your messages are critical for the proper reading and understanding of Scripture. You are able to condescend to our level of understanding. – **LA**

Gehenna

The “Hell” of Matthew 18

Gehenna, also known as the Valley of Hinnom, was once the garbage dump of the city of Jerusalem located just outside of its walls to the southwest in a deep, narrow valley. It was also the place where the bodies of executed criminals, denied a burial, were disposed. Fires were kept in a constant state of burning there to destroy the rubbish and the bodies, and to minimize the awful smell. This explains why it was called an “*everlasting fire*,” and whatever the flames didn’t devour, the maggots finished. This explains the place of “*hell fire*.”

Gehenna is **not** another name for the imaginary fiery hell of religious tradition. The mistake that religious teachers in general always make upon seeing the word “*judgment*” in Matthew 5:22, and other verses similar to it, is that they think that this judgment is the one that follows death. However, it is **not that judgment**. The judgment in Matthew 5:22 simply refers to the temporal judicial process that was in place in the days of the apostles to punish convicted lawbreakers, as well as the judicial process that will exist in the theocratic Millennial Kingdom – but it still won’t have anything to do with the judgment that occurs beyond death.

You will not be judged and thrown into Gehenna because:

1. Gehenna was the former, physical garbage dump located outside of the old city walls of Jerusalem.
2. You are not living under the future Millennial Kingdom of Christ.
3. The judgments handed out in connection with Gehenna have to do with Jewish citizens appearing physically and still alive in their natural bodies in the court of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom.
4. The judges of that court shall be the Twelve Apostles (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30).
5. The citizenship of believers today is in heaven, not in Jerusalem. “*For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 3:20).

You can safely remove the Gehenna warning light – installed by religious tradition – from your spiritual alarm panel. It doesn’t belong there.

This article is derived from URQA.com

Visit this site to find answers to your questions on the salvation of all.

The Body of Christ

The Church Is CHRIST’s Body

... The church, which is **His** body ... (Ephesians 1:22,-23).

... Now you are the body of **Christ** ... (I Corinthians 12:27).

... The body of **Christ** (Ephesians 4:12).

... Members of **His** body ... (Ephesians 5:30).

There Is Only ONE Body

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into **one** body ... (I Corinthians 12:13).

We ... are **one** body in Christ ... (Romans 12:4-5).

The Body Has Only ONE Head

... Christ is the **Head** of the church (Ephesians 5:23).

And He is the **Head** of the body, the church ... (Colossians 1:18).

The Body Has MANY Members

For as we have **many members** in one body ... so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every **one members** one of another (Romans 12:4-5).

... We are **members** one of another (Ephesians 4:25).

Now you are the body of Christ, and **members** in particular (I Corinthians 12:27).

EACH Body Member Is Unique

... All members have not the same function (Romans 12:4).

The Ministry of Kindness

by – J.R. Miller

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved – clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Colossians 3:12).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

What is more worthwhile than kindness? What else in life is more beautiful in itself? What else does more to brighten the world, and sweeten other lives?



The man whose life lacks habitual kindliness may succeed splendidly in a worldly sense. He may win his way to high honor; he may gather his millions; he may climb to a conspicuous place among men; but he has missed that which alone gives beauty to a life – the joy and blessing of being kind. There are men who are so intent on *winning the race* that they have neither eye nor heart nor hand for the human needs along the wayside.

When we speak of kindness, we think not so much of “large” things as of the “little” things of thoughtfulness and gentleness which one may do along life's way. There are people who now and then do some *great thing* of which everybody speaks, but whose common days are empty of *love's personal ministries*. There are men who give large sums of money to found or endow institutions, but who fail altogether in love's sweet spirit in their own homes and among their own companions.

Is it not better that we shall have a gentle heart which will prompt us to unbroken kindliness in word and deed, than that once in a great while we should do some *conspicuous* act of charity; living, meanwhile, in all our common relations – a cold, selfish, unsympathetic, ungentle and loveless life?

There are men and women by whom, all along their path, is wrought a *ministry of kindness* which brightens and blesses the lives of all who come within their influence. Their course through this world is like that of a *river* across a desert whose banks are fringed with green. They are ever doing thoughtful little things which add to the world's sweetness and happiness.

Once in crossing a meadow, I came to a spot that was filled with fragrance. Yet I could see no flowers, and I wondered whence the fragrance came. At last I found – low down, close to the ground, hidden by the tall grass – innumerable little flowers growing. It was from these that the fragrance came.

It is just so, when you enter some homes. There is a *rich perfume of love* that pervades the entire place. It may be a home of wealth and luxury, or it may be plain and bare. It does not matter – it is not the house, nor the furniture, nor the adornment that makes the air of sweetness. We fail to realize how much happiness even *very little things* give. It may be only a word of cheer as we meet a neighbor on the street, or a note of sympathy when there is trouble in the home, or a simple remembrance on a birthday or an anniversary. Such seeming trifles, costing nothing but thoughtfulness and an expression of love, are life and cheer to those to whom they come. They make burdens lighter, rough paths smoother, hard toil easier, loneliness more endurable.

If the *heart* is full of the love of Christ, the *disposition* will be loving, and it will need no *rules* to teach the *lips* to speak ever gracious words, and the *hands* to do always the things of kindness – and to do them always at the right time. Too many wait until it is *too late* to be kind.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved – clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Colossians 3:12).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).