



DO JUSTICE
LOVE KINDNESS
WALK HUMBLY

Micah 6:8

UPCOMING DATES ...

- Young Families Big Birthday – 19 May
 - Kids Encounter – 24 May
 - Water Baptisms – 26 May
 - Hour of Power – 30 May

For more information or to register for any of these events go to inchurch.com.au

2019 – CG Notes #11

The Words of Kindness

Key verse:

Micah 6:8 (ESV)

⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,^{1a} and to walk humbly with your God?

So far, we have considered our motives for doing acts of kindness and the preparation of our hearts, and we have been encouraged to actually do the works of kindness.

This week we will move to another area of life where we can direct our hearts to *love kindness*. This is the significant area of life that involves giving attention to the words we speak.

Our words are far more than carriers of information. Words are powerful, and they can accomplish great good or inflict harm.

Proverbs 18:21 (HCSB)

21 Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

James, the brother of Jesus, was a prominent leader in the early church. His comments regarding a person's speech appear to be nearly fatalistic as if there is no hope for anyone to ever do things right. A common Jewish belief was that spoken words were a frequent means to committing sin and harm. It's apparent that James had this in mind when he warned the believers.

By way of review, read James 3:1-12

- What do you think James intended to achieve by presenting believers with these thoughts?
- What positives can you glean from what seems to be a negative passage?
- What might these warnings from James protect us from or prevent happening?

James 2:2 (NASB)

For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

James admits that we all stumble in many ways. For most of us, he is stating the obvious. What are some other ways that we are fallible and vulnerable as human beings?

James' message of hope is found in the latter part of verse 2. What hope is found there?

- Why do you think mastery in the area of speech is capable of affecting all other areas of life?

Take control of your tongue

Without an awareness of our personal responsibility to be in control of ourselves and our speech in particular, we might end up in a situation such as James somberly described in chapter 3. But if we *do know*, then we are forewarned and equipped to take preventative measures.

James began his letter with an exhortation to every one of us:

James 1:19 (NKJV)

19 [a]So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

James uses the words "swift" and "slow". These are direct opposites. If you were to divide your listening and your speaking, what type of ratio do you think James proposes? How could this be helpful in controlling your speech?

Allow the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in you.

Ultimately, we all know how much the Holy Spirit helps us when we yield our lives to His control. The Passion Translation provides a fresh rendering of this familiar passage. The phrase “strength of spirit” is sometimes translated “self-control” in other Bible versions. I like this rendering as it encourages me to know that it really is possible to be the person that I hope to be and I can do the things God wants me to do.

Take a moment or two to review these verses and discuss how you can apply these Holy Spirit attributes to living a life of kindness.

Galatians 5:22-23 (TPT)

²²⁻²³ But the fruit^[a] produced by the Holy Spirit within you is divine love in all its varied expressions: ^[b] joy that overflows, ^[c] peace that subdues, patience^[d] that endures, kindness^[e] in action, a life full of virtue, ^[f] faith that prevails, gentleness of heart, and strength of spirit. ^[g] Never set the law above these qualities, for they are meant to be limitless. ^[h]