

# Lutheran Women in Mission

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## Fruit of the Spirit-Kindness by Jan Brunette

### Opening

Sing "How Can I Thank You, Lord" (LW 385, TLH 417) or "In You is Gladness" (LW 442, LBW 552) or "The Fruit of the Spirit" (All God's People Sing 225).

*Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee. Thus shall I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name (Psalm 63:3-4 RSV).*

### Kindness Flows From a Fruitful Vine

Fruit bearing is the outward sign of the inner life. As the power of Christ enters our very being, His spiritual power (sap) flows in and through us.

**Read John 15:5.**

How does Jesus say we receive that sap and, eventually, bear fruit?

Is spiritual fruit possible without Him?

Understanding the need for the power of Christ in our lives, when does Jesus say this occurs? **See John 15:7**

Part of the fruit of the Spirit is the ability to show kindness, even when it hurts (as it often does.) During those times, it is difficult to perceive it as a blessing. In **John 15:1-2**, Jesus reveals one of the eternal purposes for pain in the midst of developing His kindness. What is that purpose?

Remembering that Christ, our Savior, is also our example in all things, read **Titus 3:4-7** and **Ephesians 2:4-7**. How did God manifest His kindness and love to us?

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this plan?

As you

-read these sections, note the following words and discuss with others their significance to you as His chosen child.

From **Titus 3:4-7**

Washing of rebirth  
Renewal



Poured out  
Generously  
Justified  
Heirs  
Eternal life

From **Ephesians 2:4-7**

Seated us with Him in the heavenly realms  
In Christ Jesus  
Incomparable riches of His grace  
Expressed in His kindness to us

### **Kindness Costs**

The price for this kindness, this inheritance, proved to be a painful and lonely walk for Christ. What evidence do we have of Jesus' pain in the following verses?

**John 12:27**  
**Luke 22:41-44**  
**Hebrews 12:1-2**

In the same way, we understand that bearing Christ's kindness to others may also come with a price. While it is easy to show kindness to those we love, what about the person on the highway who is rude and aggressive or the person who cuts in front of us in the grocery store line? Is it easy to show kindness when others use hurting words? At times like these, showing kindness is difficult, but when our desire for kindness runs out, Christ's loving kindness takes over. The Holy Spirit reminds us of all that Christ has done for us and empowers us to show loving kindness in His place. On our own, we cannot do so; with Him, we can.

### **Kindness Without End**

Read the following verses and note the endless kindnesses granted to us through His Spirit.

**Isaiah 54:7-8**  
**Jeremiah 31:3**  
**Hosea 11:4**

What blessings are promised to those who remain in Christ?

**John 15:11, 16**  
**Colossians 1:10-14**

### **Closing**

Read the following as a benediction and then join in the prayer that follows.

Dear sisters-in-Christ, *chosen, holy, and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with ... [Christ's] kindness ... Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you, for that is a great kindness we can share with all* (Colossians 3:12-13).

Dear Father in heaven, as I remember the kindness You displayed through Your Son, Jesus Christ, help me share that same kindness with others. Send Your Holy Spirit to strengthen me when kindness is most difficult, that I may share His kindness on Your behalf. In His name I

pray. Amen.

Jan Brunette is a freelance writer, author and public speaker. She is an MMV consultant and serves as HOPE Committee chairman for LWML.

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