

September 12, 2021

# Love Is Kind

1 Corinthians 13:4b

## Spiritual gifts for the public good

Last time we saw that the love is patient—love has long nostrils, meaning, it is long-suffering with the offenses and injuries of others. This morning, Paul continues by shown us secondly that “Love is kind.” The Corinthians struggled with kindness *particularly* with their practice of the spiritual gifts. They used their gifts for self-promotion, rather than for the public good. Paul wants to show them a more excellent way. So then what is kindness?

### *The Big Idea...*

Kindness *is* a fruit of the Holy Spirit whereby you freely and gladly do good to others whenever they have need and you have ability

- ★The Doctrine of Kindness
- ★The Duty of Kindness
- ★The Delight of Kindness

## I. The Doctrine of Kindness

### Natural niceness

First let’s consider what Paul *doesn’t* mean. When Paul says “love is kind” he doesn’t mean that *love is nice*. Kindness is *not* the same thing as niceness. There are two types of niceness. **First** there is a *natural niceness*. Some people, Christians and non-Christians alike, have a very pleasant disposition. They have

a mild temperament, and are generally friendly and polite to others. This is *natural* niceness. meaning they were born with this niceness. God is the one who formed our inward parts, He knit us together in our mother's womb (**Psalm 139:13**)—meaning if you are generally nice, God made you that way. **1 Corinthians 4:7** says “What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” Clearly this natural niceness is *not* the same thing as kindness. True Christian kindness requires the power of the Holy Spirit. Natural niceness only requires common grace.

### Worldly niceness

The **second** kind of niceness is a *worldly niceness*. This is manufactured niceness. This niceness is unwilling to offend, this niceness insists on being polite to all sides, even the side propagating evil, this niceness is concerned above all else with being winsome. King Jehoshaphat, though he was a good king, suffered from this type of worldly niceness by his alliance with the wicked king Ahab. He was rebuked by a prophet in **2 Chronicles 19:2** “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD?” It's this type of worldly niceness that we must especially not confuse with true Christian kindness. Ask yourself: Was Jesus *being nice* when He called the Pharisees hypocrites and blind guides?<sup>1</sup> Was Jesus being nice when He asked them “how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?”<sup>2</sup> No. But He was being kind. You see beloved:

Kindness is willing to rebuke *if* duty requires.

Niceness will never rebuke, *because that's not nice*.

Kindness never compromises on the truth.

Niceness will compromise *if it is nice to do so*.

Kindness is motivated by the fear of God.

Niceness is motivated by the fear of man.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 23:13, 16

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 23:33

## Niceness is destructive to the Church

Perhaps the greatest danger today that has infiltrated major evangelical institutions, and has infected major evangelical leaders is this type worldly niceness. When the Church mistakes worldly niceness for true Christian kindness, she always compromises with the world. That's why Critical Race Theory has infiltrated the Church, *because it's not nice* to disagree and debate with those advancing it.<sup>3</sup> That's why some leaders are now calling on us adopt what's called "pronoun hospitality" *because it's not nice* to call a boy a boy who identifies as a girl.<sup>4</sup> Worldly niceness is destructive to the Church. Case in point is the Corinthian Church. They exercised worldly niceness in 1 Cor. 5 when they refused to discipline the man for sexual sin. Paul called their worldly niceness arrogant (v.2). And he warned them that it would hurt the whole church. "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" (v.6) Brothers and sisters, please do not be nice.

## What is kindness?

What we must be is kind. So then, what is true Christian kindness? Paul says love is *kind*—*χρηστός* chrēstos is the root word. Two interesting facts about *χρηστός*. First, the ancient historian Suetonius in his biography on Emperor

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<sup>3</sup> As of the writing of this message the Gospel Coalition has still not done a book review on Voddie Baucham's book *Fault Lines* which is against CRT though they have given much space to promote wokism to other pastors/teachers/authors.

<sup>4</sup> The Gospel Coalition gave a positive review on Preston Sprinkle's book *Embodied* which promotes this view. Source: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/embodied-transgender-identities-the-church-and-what-the-bible-has-to-say/>

Claudius uses Chréstos to refer to Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> What is kindness? Jesus. Hospitals—institutions of kindness—calls themselves Chréstos or Christus down to this day. Secondly, χρηστός was a common slave name in the ancient Graeco-Roman world. It means useful. Slaves were Chréstos because they were *useful* to those whom they served. That’s what kindness<sup>6</sup> means: to serve others, to be *useful* to others. As Webster’s 1828 says, it is laboring for the highest good of others by “...granting their requests, supplying their [needs] or assisting them in distress.”

### **Principle: Kindness is freely and gladly doing good to others**

So we arrive at our **main principle** this morning: *Kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit whereby you freely and gladly do good to others whenever they have need and you have ability.* Now how do we know this is true Christian kindness? Because this is *who God is*. **Psalm 145:17** “The Lord is righteous in all his ways *and kind in all his works.*” So let’s consider this principle in light of God’s kindness.

#### **1. God exercises kindness *freely***

What has man ever done to merit God’s kindness? “For who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” (**Romans 11:35**). Before the universe was made, what did man do to obligate God to create him? Man could nothing,

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<sup>5</sup> When Paul first arrived in Corinth, he met a husband and wife named Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2). They were in Rome “...because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.” One historian, Suetonius, wrote a biography on the emperor Claudius and said this about this event “As the Jews were indulging in constant riots at the instigation of Chrestus, [Claudius] banished them from Rome.[*Life of Claudius xxv. 4*].” F.F. Bruce notes here (on Acts 18:2) that “This Chrestus may have been an otherwise unknown trouble-maker who was active in Jewish circles in Rome about the middle of the first century, but in that case Suetonius would probably have referred to him as ‘a certain Chrestus.’ It is more likely that he had the Founder of Christianity in mind, but that, writing some seventy years after the event and not being particularly interested in Christian origins, he consulted some record of the riots and imagined wrongly that Crestus, who was mentioned as the leader of one of the parties concerned, was actually in Rome at the time, taking a prominent part in the strife.” F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), pg. 368

<sup>6</sup> The etymology of kindness is interesting: 1. kindness - Old English kyndnes meant...“produce, an increase.” 2. unkind - Old English uncynde “unnatural, not natural;” 3. unkindness - “lack of natural regard or proper consideration.” Source: <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=kind> Accessed September 9, 2021

because man was nothing.<sup>7</sup> God created man *freely* out of the kindness of own His heart. “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases” (**Psalm 115:3**).<sup>8</sup> When sin entered the world, what did man do to obligate God to refrain from destroying him? **Job 34:14-15** says “If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.” What restrained God? His *free* kindness. What did man do to obligate God to redeem him? What did man give to God to make God his debtor so that God would be forced to send His Son into the world to be crucified for sinners? Nothing. God didn’t spare His own Son, not because anyone put God in his debt but because He is infinitely kind. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (**John 3:16**) Just as the sun shines its light and radiates its heat freely without any of our help or intervention,<sup>9</sup> so the Lord’s kindness extends to us apart from anything that we do. That’s the **first attribute** of God’s kindness, He exercises it *freely*.

## 2. God exercises kindness *gladly*

He loves to bless us more than we love to be blessed. **Zephaniah 3:17** “The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; *he will rejoice over you with gladness*; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.”<sup>10</sup> Jesus’ heart rejoices every time He brings home a lost sheep. **Luke 15:5-6** “...when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, *rejoicing*.<sup>6</sup> And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘*Rejoice with me*, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’” The Father

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<sup>7</sup> “Man, before his being, could have no good qualities to invite God to make him so excellent a fabric: for, being nothing, he was as unable to allure and merit, as to bring himself into being.” Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God, Vol. 2*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, Reprint 1979), pg. 249

<sup>8</sup> What did man do to obligate God to fellowship with Him? As the Psalmist asks “...what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?” (**Psalm 8:4**).

<sup>9</sup> “He sends out his beams, without receiving any addition to himself, or substantial advantage from his creatures.” *Ibid*, pg. 219

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 104:31; Proverb 8:31

delights at the thought of fulfilling all the New Covenant promises, **Jeremiah 32:41** “*I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.*” That's the **second attribute** of God's kindness, He exercises it *gladly*.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. God exercises kindness for *all His creatures*

Our big idea says that we are to be kind *to others*—meaning everyone, both believers and non-believers, friends and enemies. Why? Because that's who God is. **Matthew 5:45** “...he makes his sun rise *on the evil* and on the good, and sends rain on the just *and on the unjust.*” **Psalm 145:16** “You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.” God has reserved some kindness for the Church *alone*.<sup>12</sup> The Church shares in the Holy Spirit, she tastes the goodness of the Word of God, and the powers of the age to come.<sup>13</sup> However God is still exceedingly kind even to those who will forever remain His enemies. **Luke 6:35** “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, *for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.*” That's the **third attribute** of God's kindness, He exercises it to *all—friend and enemy alike*.

### 4. God exercises kindness *all the time*

Our big idea says that we are to be kind to others *whenever they have need and we have ability*. That reflects that fact that we are finite, we are creatures. But God is never limited by ability. God is good *all the time*, and *all the time* God is good. When God created the Heavens and the Earth, **Genesis 1:31** says “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, *it was very good.*” Everything God made in creation works for the happiness of man. Tastebuds, friendship, marriage, children, sleep, vacations, art, music, summer, winter, mountains,

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<sup>11</sup> “He is most delighted when He is most diffusive.” Charnock, pg. 227

<sup>12</sup> See how Charnock distinguishes God's goodness from His essence, blessedness, holiness, and mercy. *Ibid*, pg. 217-218

<sup>13</sup> Hebrews 6:5

oceans, rib-eye steaks, cold beer, sex, rain, the moon, the stars, all plants used for medicine, food, clothing, animals that we can raise for food and hunt for pleasure, everything under the sun is God's kindness at work 24/7. **James 1:17** "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." That's the **fourth attribute** of God's kindness, He exercises it *all the time*.

### **The doctrine of kindness**

Our kindness is a reflection of the infinitely kind God. So that's our **doctrine of kindness**: Kindness *is* a fruit of the Holy Spirit whereby you freely and gladly do good to others whenever they have need and you have ability.

## II. The Duty of Kindness

### 1. Experimental Use

So the first duty is to *examine* ourselves. Beloved are you kind? How do you know that your kindness is not *merely* the natural niceness that some unbelievers have? Remember what Paul already said about counterfeit niceness in v.3 "If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love [*genuine Spirit wrought kindness*], I gain nothing." So consider these five marks of true Christian kindness.

#### **Mark #1: True kindness must be free**

Jesus said in **Luke 6:35** "...do good, and lend, *expecting nothing in return*."<sup>14</sup> If you show kindness only because you hope to get something from them, then you're a mercenary. Mercenaries will rescue hostages and kill bad guys, *not* because those things are good, *but* because they are getting paid. Beloved do

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<sup>14</sup> v. 34 says "And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount."

you freely do good to others? Or is your kindness quid pro quo—a favor for a favor?

### **Mark #2: True kindness must be glad**

The Lord says in **Micah 6:8** “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*, and to walk humbly with your God?” We must *love* kindness. Moses said in **Deuteronomy 15:10** “You shall give to him [*your needy brother*] freely, and *your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him.*” Jonathan Edwards says here: Whatever “...is done from love, *is done with delight*, and not grudgingly or with... reluctance of spirit.”<sup>15</sup> Do you delight in showing kindness? Or do you show kindness because you *know you have to*?

### **Mark #3: True kindness is for friend and enemy alike**

Jesus said **Luke 6:32-35** “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same...<sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, and do good...and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.” Beloved, the motive matters here. For nearly all my Christian life I have wrongly interpreted **Romans 12:20**, Paul says: “...if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; *for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.*” I thought he meant if you show your enemy kindness, you were heaping up judgment on him for that future Day. That’s not what he means. Paul is quoting **Proverbs 25:21-22**. It’s an analogy. In order to make metal pliable so that the blacksmith could shape it, he would put it in the fire heaping up coals on it. Then it would become soft. Do you see? Kindness is the fiery coals that softens even the hardest hearts.<sup>16</sup> Beloved, mercy has muscles that can melt hearts of stone. Do

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<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *Charity and Its Fruits*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprinted 2013), pg. 102

<sup>16</sup> That’s why Paul says in the verse immediately following “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”

you exercise your kindness to unbelievers? Don't you know that it's God's kindness that can lead them to repentance?<sup>17</sup>

#### **Mark #4: True kindness must be done according to God's Word**

Sincerity is not enough. The WCF 16.1 says "Good works [*kindness*] are only such as God hath commanded in his holy Word, and not such as...are devised by men, out of blind zeal, or upon any pretense of good intention." Kindness is an objective thing determined by God's word *alone*. Which means we don't get to choose what kindness is. The world says that we should be *kind* and allow homosexual marriage, or that we should be *kind* and agree that all religions are equally true.<sup>18</sup> Beloved this is adding to the word of God. God tells us what is kind. Any other so-called kindness that is not expressly laid down in Scripture or deduced by good and necessary consequence must be rejected. Those who practice 'kindness' apart from the Word of God do terrible things.<sup>19</sup> Jesus told His disciples in **John 16:2** "They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you *will think he is offering service to God*." Loved ones, do you let Word of God inform you as to what true kindness is? Or do you just follow your deceitful heart?

#### **Mark #5: True kindness is action**

Kindness is action *not merely* warm thoughts. **1 John 3:17-18** says "...if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? <sup>18</sup> Little children, let us not love

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<sup>17</sup> Romans 2:4

<sup>18</sup> I've even heard some Christians say that loving your neighbor [*being kind*] means that you must get the vaccine.

<sup>19</sup> C.S. Lewis once said: "Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victim may be the most oppressive. It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated, but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with the approval of their own conscience." Source: <http://libertytree.ca/quotes/C..S..Lewis.Quote.E1E7> Accessed September 11, 2021

in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”<sup>20</sup> The litmus test of true Christian kindness is not in our talk but in our walk.<sup>21</sup> Kindness is good works.<sup>22</sup> This is soul and body work. **First**, we must show kindness to **the souls of others** by teaching those who are ignorant, stirring up others to duty, warning and rebuking those out of the way, counseling and comforting the downtrodden. **Second**, we must show kindness to **the bodies of others**. Jonathan Edwards breaks this down in three ways: giving, doing, and suffering.<sup>23</sup> 1) *Giving* others those things *that they need*, that we have. **James 2:15-16** “If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?” 2) *Doing* for others those things they can’t do by themselves. **Matthew 7:12** “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” 3) *Suffering* with others as necessity requires. **Galatians 6:2** “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” 1 **John 3:16** “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.” So test yourself beloved, does your kindness act? When you see someone in need and you have ability to help them, do you?

## 2. Admonitory Use

The second duty is to *admonish* ourselves. When Paul says “Love is kind” he is rebuking everyone with a malicious selfish spirit. The person who refuses

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<sup>20</sup> cf. James 2:15-16

<sup>21</sup> “The proper and conclusive evidence of a man’s sincerely desiring the good of another, is his seeking it in his practice—for whatever we truly desire, we do thus seek.” Edwards, pg. 104

<sup>22</sup> There is a right allergic reaction that phrase “good works” and a wrong allergic reaction. The right allergic reaction is when anyone claims that good works contribute to our salvation. This is heresy. Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” But the wrong allergic reaction is to dismiss good works altogether. This is a heresy of another sort. James 2:14-17 “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? <sup>17</sup> So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

<sup>23</sup> Edwards, pg.98-99

to be kind has forsaken the fear of the Lord. **Job 6:14** says “He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.” Consider how God has sent judgment against men for their unkindness. Do you remember the story of Nabal? David and his men were in the wilderness hiding from King Saul. They showed their kindness to Nabal by guarding his shepherds so that they were not attacked by robbers. But when David needed food and supplies for his men, Nabal refused to help though **1 Samuel 25:2** says that he was very rich. What happened? **v.38** says that “...about ten days later the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.” God killed the man because of His unkindness. Don’t tell me that God is not a God who doesn’t carefully watch all of our deeds.

### **The terrible things God threatens against unkindness**

Furthermore God threatens terrible things against unkindness on the Final Day. In **Matthew 25:41**, Jesus says “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Jesus’ point here is *not* that if you do enough kindness you will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>24</sup> No one can do enough kindness to get into heaven, *however* true Spirit wrought kindness reveals a heart that has been transformed by Jesus Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:17** says “...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” Therefore if you lack true kindness, it reveals that you do not belong to Jesus

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<sup>24</sup> WCF 16.5 “We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom, by them, we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants: and because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit; and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.”

Christ, and He will send you to hell for that.<sup>25</sup> Friend if that is you, turn to the Lord right now. It is by His mere mercy you are alive right now. You are not causing your heart to beat, or your lungs to work, you can not even add one day to your life. Your life is like a vapor that appears for just a little while and then vanishes away. Your days are like a passing shadow. It is by His kindness that you are alive. **Romans 2:4** says "...do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" Cry out for mercy for your sin. Call out to the Savior who is gentle and lowly in heart. He promises that if you call upon the name of the Lord, you will be saved.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. Hortatory Use

The third duty is to *exhortation*. Clearly Paul is urging us to put on true Christian kindness. That through the power of the Holy Spirit, we would freely and gladly do good to others whenever they have need and we have ability. So I want to charge three groups this morning.

#### 1. Children

Children I charge you to be kind. You might think, I'm just a little child, how can I possibly show kindness? Well, first I must ask you: have you trusted Jesus Christ to be *your* Lord and *your* Savior? Do you know that nothing troubles Jesus more than if you don't believe Him?<sup>27</sup> When He rose from the dead, He didn't rebuke His disciples for abandoning Him or denying Him or

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<sup>25</sup> WCF 16.7 Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands; and of good use both to themselves and others: yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God: and yet, their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God." Which means that if Jesus is not your Lord and Savior, you have never done a 'good work' in your life. God doesn't consider any of your kindnesses as acceptable to Him because He is holy and you are unholy. How can you an unclean thing bring anything acceptable to Him?

<sup>26</sup> Romans 10:13

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2018), pg. 32ff. Likewise John Owen once said "The greatest sorrow and burden you can lay on the Father, the greatest unkindness you can do to him is not to believe that he loves you."

any other sin. He only rebuked them for not believing in Him (**Luke 24:45**). The greatest kindness that you can do for God is to believe on His Son whom He sent into the world. Trust Jesus that He is the true bread of life that will satisfy the hunger in your soul. Trust Jesus that He is the resurrection and the life, and that by having Him you will never die. He delights in your belief.

So then what kindness can you do for others? Well there is a story of a little girl in the OT, we don't even know her name. She was carried off by the Syrians in one of their raids on Israel. She became a slave. Some time later, her master Naaman came down with leprosy, which was an incurable disease at the time. And this little girl who was stolen from her family by Naaman gave him a life giving word. She told him that if he went to the prophet Elisha in Samaria and he would be cured. Now the rest of the story is quite fantastic, and children you can read it for yourself in 2 Kings 5. But the man was miraculously healed. But this wasn't a mere story. It was a prophecy, a picture of a sinner who has the incurable disease of sin, being cured by the true Prophet Jesus Christ. In other word, this little girl led this man to his salvation. Children, that is a true kindness, telling others about Jesus. You don't have to be strong, or wise, or powerful to be kind, you just need to speak. Have you heard of the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world? Have you heard of Jesus Christ, the One who can give you eternal life? There's no greater kindness you can give than to help others find the Savior.

## 2. The Congregation

Dear congregation, I charge you to show kindness to each other. One of the ways you can show kindness is to pray for each other. Paul says in **Ephesians 6:18** “[pray] at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, *making supplication for all the saints.*” Beloved this is one of the membership vows you make to this Church, that *we will not neglect to pray for ourselves and others.* What a tremendous kindness you can give your Church family. Please use the Church directory, you can pray through it name by name. You can text or email, or you can call each

other and ask: *how can I pray for you today? What can I praise God with you for?* Loved ones, don't miss out on this tremendous kindness.

### 3. Citizens

How can you be kind in the current political climate? These new vaccine mandates from the President are tyranny *because* they trespass upon the conscience and blackmail you with your livelihood. How do you show kindness to tyrants? You resist them.<sup>28</sup> It is not kind tyrants to allow them to be pretend to be gods over our consciences. God alone is Lord of the conscience. As a Christian citizens it is our duty to warn these tyrants just as Daniel warned Nebuchadnezzar and John the Baptist warned King Herod. It is not kind to Christ to allow another to usurp His Lordship. “For to this end Christ died and lived again, *that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living*” (**Romans 14:9**) It is not kind to our fellow citizens or to our children to sit idly by and do nothing. When we stand up for our own unalienable rights—the rights of conscience—we loving our neighbor because we are also standing up for their rights. Kindness is resistance. Some of you have already done that with your employers by writing religious exemption letters. This is probably still coming for others. Beloved, remember who you are speaking to and who you represent. Some of your employers are just scare and they don't want to be lose their jobs. Show them *why* you are not scared. **1 Peter 3:14-15** “Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.” Beloved, you belong to the God who made the Heavens and the Earth, what do you have to fear? **Psalms 118:6** “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” I urge you as citizens to be kind by resisting tyranny.

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<sup>28</sup> Resistance to tyranny is a form of kindness. There are several instances of civil disobedience in Scripture which were motivated by kindness. Think of the Hebrew midwives who were ordered to kill the male babies by Pharaoh but because they feared God, they disobeyed and the babies were spared (**Exodus 1:17**). Or think of how Rahab spared the spies by deceiving her king about the way they left the city (**Joshua 2:1-4**). James calls this act of civil disobedience good works that showed her faith was genuine (**James 2:25**).

### Summarizing kindness

To sum up we saw the 5 marks of true kindness. True kindness is 1) Freely given 2) Gladly given; 3) Shown to friend and enemy alike; 4) Done according to the Word of God; and 5) That kindness is not *merely* warm thoughts but action. Furthermore we saw that God threatens terrible things against unkindness. Finally, we heard an exhortation to children, to congregants, and to citizens in practicing kindness. That is our duty of kindness.

## III. The Delight of Kindness

### The rewards for kindness

Consider the great rewards that God promises those who freely and gladly do good for others.

**Proverbs 19:17** “Whoever is kind...lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.” Every kindness is as a loan to the Lord, and He will not only repay you, but will repay you with interest.

**Proverbs 11:24-25** “One person gives freely, *yet gains even more...A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will [himself] be refreshed.*”<sup>29</sup> None of your kindnesses will ever be lost.

**Matthew 10:42** “And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

**Matthew 25:34-36** “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty

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<sup>29</sup> NIV

and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”

You might say, “But aren’t our best works mixed with sin, defiled with so much weakness and imperfection?” Yes. All of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (**Isaiah 64:6**). But don’t you know that because Jesus Christ has accepted us, He has accepted all our good works as well. Some of you dye your hair to hide the gray that’s coming through. That’s what Christ does with our imperfect works. When were brought into union with Christ, He dyes all our works with His merits so that they will please Him.<sup>30</sup>

### **The kindest gift**

Beloved, as great as the reward God will give us for our kindness, what greater gift could God show us than by giving us His own Son? There is no greater kindness. If God would have presented us with thousands of worlds, thousands of servants at our disposal, thousands of pieces of gold, thousands of lifetimes to live—all these would not be as kind as the gift of Jesus Christ. The wounds that Jesus suffered for us are a greater testimony of God’s kindness than if He gave us all of Heaven and Earth.<sup>31</sup> Loved ones consider the kindness of God:

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<sup>30</sup> *But you say, doesn't Jesus say that "...when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'" Yes. But God, the gracious God that He is, loves to reward us for fulfilling the duties that we owe Him. 1 Chronicles 29:14-16 "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. <sup>15</sup> For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding. <sup>16</sup> O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own."*

<sup>31</sup> If a man has Christ—though he be the poorest man on Earth—He is the richest man in Heaven. But if a man has not Christ—though he be the richest man on earth—he is the poorest man in Hell.

“...we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

<sup>4</sup>But when the goodness and loving kindness  
of God our Savior appeared,  
<sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness,  
*but according to his own mercy,*  
by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,  
whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>  
so that being justified by his grace  
we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ”<sup>32</sup>

What greater kindness could God have shown us? As the modern hymn goes:

What gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer,  
*there is no more for heaven now to give*  
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom,  
my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace<sup>33</sup>

That's *why* the greatest songs *the world has known* has been written to this Savior.

John Newton:

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ears;  
It soothe his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his tears.

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<sup>32</sup> Titus 3:3-

<sup>33</sup> Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me by Jonny Robinson, Michael Farren, Rich Thompson

It makes the wounded spirit whole and calms the troubled breast  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary rest.<sup>34</sup>

...

Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,  
My Prophet, Priest, and King;  
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,  
And cold my warmest thought;  
But when I see thee as thou art,  
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim  
With ev'ry fleeting breath;  
And may the music of thy name  
Refresh my soul in death.<sup>35</sup>

We could belt out a thousand more and be here into the night extolling the loving kindness of Jesus our Savior. Beloved, do you want to know what kindness is? Do you want to know what Paul meant by "Love is kind." Look to the tree. Look to the open grave. Look to the right hand of God Almighty and there you will see a Savior who is kindness incarnate.

What riches of kindness He lavished on us  
His blood was the payment, His life was the cost  
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford  
Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more

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<sup>34</sup> Charles Hodges, *Princeton and the Work of the Christian Ministry*, Ed. James M. Garretson, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2012), pg. 292

<sup>35</sup> Source: <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/jesus-my-shepherd-husband-friend> accessed September 12, 2021