

Love Is Kind To Those Who Aren't

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Love Is Kind To Those Who Aren't

When Love Breaks Through, Part 3

1 Corinthians 13:4b

I. Kindness Conveys Sacrificial Love

A. What Is "Kindness"?

- χρηστεύεται – *chrēsteuetai* – only time this noun is used in NT, though it's cognate verb is found in the NT 18x
 - sometimes translated "**goodness**"
 - root meaning: **useful, helpful, adaptable, purposeful**
 - because of its usefulness, **excellence** and **valuable** is implied
 - when used in reference to foods: **healthy** and **tasty** (just like God's love)
 - ie/ See! My reference to food can picture God's love!
- Clement of Rome used this word "as you show kindness, so kindness will be shown to you" (A.C. Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians, A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Eerdmans, p. 1047)
- Kindness is the expression of what is good
- OT word for "kind" is the same word as "good" (**טוב**)
- Another OT Word that we see translated as "lovingkindness" is **chesed** – 45x (eg. Gen 24:49)
 - **Psalm 63:3** Your **lovingkindness** is better than life
 - **Psalm 138:2** I will worship ... and praise Your name for Your **lovingkindness**
- David Hocking: "Kindness is the opposite of attack, harshness, or insensitivity to human need. Kindness wants to help and be a blessing more than a burden or hardship." (*Chapter 13: Where Love Begins*, Harvest House, 1992, p. 111)
- Gary Smalley with John Trent: "Kindness is communicating that someone is valuable through our actions." (*Love Is A Decision*, Word Publishers, 1989, p. 65)
- "Love is kind (χρηστεύεται, *chrēsteuetai*). It responds to others with the same **tender heart** and **forgiveness** that God has shown to us in Christ (Eph. 4:32). Kindness recognizes that everyone carries a heavy load. The kindness of Christians in the second century so surprised their pagan counterparts that, according to Tertullian (*Apol.* 3.39), they called Christians *chrestiani*, 'made up of mildness or kindness,' rather than *christiani*." (D.E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Academic, 2003, p. 617)

B. What Does Kindness Have To Do With Love?

1 Peter 1:5-7 5b add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly **kindness**, and to brotherly **kindness** love.

- Sacrificial love (*agape*) gives kindness to those who do not deserve it

- "Kindness is the ability to love people more than they deserve." (Elizabeth George, *God's Garden Of Grace*, p. 117)
- Spicq observes that the word "suggests the warm, generous welcome the Christian always gives his brothers ... does his utmost to be thoughtful, helpful and kind, always in a pleasant way ..., and confirms the element of of magnanimity in *agapē*." (A.C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 2000, pp. 1047–1048)
- W. Graham Scroggie: "You can no more have love without kindness than you can have springtime without flowers." (*The Love Life: A Study of 1 Corinthians 13*, p. 39)
- Alexander Strauch: "Kindness is love in work clothes." (*Leading In Love*, p. 44)

C. How Does Kindness Relate To Patience?

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is **patient** and **kind**

2 Timothy 2:24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but **kind** to everyone, able to teach, **patiently** enduring evil,

- Alexander Strauch: "Paul's first two descriptions of love are paired together and balance each other perfectly: Love suffers long (the passive quality) and love shows kindness (the active quality). Patience and kindness are two sides of the same coin of love." (*Leading With Love*, Lewis & Roth Publishers, 2006, p. 44)
- "Chrysostom perceives **love** here as that which breaks the spiral of passion, anger, and resentment by **showing kindness**: 'not only by enduring nobly, but also by soothing and comforting do they cure the sore and heal the wound of passion.'" (A.C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 2000, pp. 1047–1048)

II. Kindness Conveys The Heart Of God

A. God Is The Universal Standard In Determining What Is Good And Kind

- In days of relative values, "goodness" is as diverse as opinion holders.
- What makes "good" good?
- *Tov* & *Tub* describe God's goodness

Luke 18:18-19 ¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "**Good** Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me **good**? No one is **good** but One, that is, God.

Psalms 52:1 David writes " Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The **goodness** of God endures continually."

- Wayne Grudem: "The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval."

"... 'good' can be understood to mean 'worthy of approval,' but we have not answered the question, approval by whom? In one sense, we can say that anything that is truly good should be worthy of approval by us. But in a more ultimate sense, we are not free to decide by ourselves what is worthy of approval and what is not. Ultimately, therefore, God's being and actions are perfectly worthy of his own approval. He is therefore the final standard of good. Jesus implies this when he says, "No one is good but God alone" (Luke 18:19)." (*Systematic Theology*, p. 197)

Psalm 52:3 You love evil more than **good**, Lying rather than speaking righteousness. Selah

B. God Is The Ultimate Benefactor Of Goodness And Kindness

- A.W. Tozer defines God's goodness as: "that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His unflinching attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people." (*Knowledge of the Holy*, p.88)
- Heb. *Hesed* = lovingkindness, compassion, goodness
- Heb. *Yatab* = to be good, pleasing
- Heb. *Rason* = pleasure, delight, favor, good will, acceptance of others

Ezra 3:11 He is **good**, for His **lovingkindness** is upon Israel forever.

- Gr. *Chrestotes* = kind, helpful
- John S. Feinberg: "When we look at the biblical concept of divine goodness, one major idea stands out. It is that God is concerned about the well-being of his creatures and does things to promote it. Of course, God is interested in doing what is morally good and right, but biblical writers capture that idea by referring to his righteousness and holiness. Moreover, because he does what is righteous and holy in his dealings with all, the result is promotion of their well-being." (*No One Like Him*, p. 366)

C. God's Salvation Results From His Kindness Towards Us

- John S. Feinberg: "The NT term for goodness is *chrestotes*. This particular word is used of a human attribute I Rom 3:12. It is used of God only in the Pauline corpus and conveys the idea of being kind and helpful. Most typically in Paul, it designates God's goodness and kindness in salvation through Christ (Rom 2:4; 11:22; Tit 3:4ff). (*No One Like Him*, p. 366)

1. Because Of God's Kindness, Sinners Are Reached Out To

Nehemiah 9:17 You are God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in **kindness** and did not forsake them.

Luke 6:35 For He is **kind** to the unthankful and evil

2. **Because Of God's Kindness, Sinners Are Warned To Repent Or Face Judgment**

Romans 2:4 Or 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?

Romans 11:22 Note then the **kindness** and the **severity** of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

3. **Because Of God's Kindness, Salvation Is Fully Paid For By God For Us**

Titus 3:4-7 4 But when the **kindness** and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- Kindness & Love of God
- Regeneration of Holy Spirit
- Justification by Christ

4. **Because Of Jesus' Kindness At The Cross, God's Amazing Grace Is Timeless**

Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His **kindness** toward us in Christ Jesus

D. **God's "Lovingkindness" Proves That His Love Will Not Fail Even When Ours Does**

- OT – "Lovingkindness" = *hesed* = steadfast love, unfailing love
- *Hesed* – 250x in OT
- In Israel's sin, God demonstrates a lovingkindness (Ex 34:6; Num 14:18)

Jeremiah 31:3 I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

Exodus 34:6 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **steadfast love** and faithfulness,

- NASB: "lovingkindness"
- NET Bible: "loyal love"
-
- W.A. Van Gemeren: "The God of the covenant shows his covenantal faithfulness by His loving commitment to His people, regardless of their responsiveness or righteousness (Dt 7:7-8)... The blessings are generally described as the divine benefits (Dt 7:13-16). Hence, lovingkindness is not a mere relational term; it is active. The God who loves showers His

benefits on His covenantal people." ("Lovingkindness," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, W.A. Elwell, ed., p. 661)

- John Frame: "For God to show *hesed* is for him to keep the promises of his covenant... His providential preservation of life is his *hesed*." (*The Doctrine of God*, p. 439, 441)

E. Our Kindness Reflects God's Kindness

2 Corinthians 6:4-6 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by ... patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;

- "Oh, you're like your mom that way"
- "You must get that from your dad"
- May others at least think: "You're **kind** like God that way"

III. Kindness Is Conveyed To Believers Through The Holy Spirit

- We can give excuses to not be kind:
 - PMS
 - Sleeplessness
 - Anger
 - Victimization

Galatians 5:16 Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

- The flesh will give us that tendency to become bitter, selfish, but we must counteract that with the Spirit

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ... hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, ... envy, murders ... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- The works of the flesh are contrasted with the Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23 ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

- When we walk in the Spirit, the Spirit of God gives us the divine enablement to be like Christ rather than just acting in our flesh
- Kindness is the divine ability to have the heart of Christ – full of mercy and compassion

IV. Kindness Conveys God's Love For Others

A. Kindness Compassionately Relieves Those Who Are Burdened

Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

- Christ's kindness reached out to heal a leper (Lk 5:12-13) when everyone stayed away
- He reached out to the diseased and demonic (Lk 13:13), the blind, the hungry

Matthew 11:28-30 28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is **easy** and My burden is light."

- "easy" is the same word for "kind"
- Yoke – young ox is paired with an experienced ox
- The experienced ox walks with the young ox and bears most of the burdens
- Jesus carries our load
- We carry the load for others

Jeremiah 52:32 And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon.

- Evil-Merodach, the king of Babylon, exuded kindness towards Jehoiachin, king of Judah
 - Removed him from prison
 - Ascended him to a throne above other kings
 - Permitted him to eat in the presence of the king
 - Provided for him the rest of his life
- Month of March – kindness to our community

B. Kindness Extends Beyond Our Comfort Zone

2 Timothy 2:24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but **kind** to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,

- When in a place of disagreement, kind people don't quarrel
- When someone is ignorant, kind people teach
- When confronting evil, kind people endure

C. Kindness Is A Tenderness That Sets The Tone In Tense Situations

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

- "Kindness" = χρηστός = *chrēstos*
- "tenderhearted" = εὐσπλαγχνος = *eusplanchnos*
 - *splanchnos* originally meant the inward part of the body (heart, lungs and internal organs; e.g. Judas' guts in Acts 1:8) but later symbolized the seat of emotions
 - 11x in NT, 8x by Paul
 - center/heart of compassion – 2 Cor 6:12; 7:15; Philemon 7,12,20; 1 Jn 3:17
 - compassion – Phil 1:8; 2:1; Col 3:12; Eph 4:32
- Smalley & Trent: "Tenderness acts as a firebreak to an advancing forest fire. Fire-fighters get ahead of the fire, then clear a wide trail free of all 'flammable' material.... That's one

tremendous benefit of tenderness. It takes work to 'strip' an area clear of emotional kindling – particularly when a fiery trial is closing in on us." (*Love Is A Decision*, p. 64)

- **Grumpiness** is a public announcement that we won't be showing God's kindness so everyone in the room will know to walk on egg shells around us.
- Of the Seven Dwarves, **Grumpy** is the only named after a sin.
 - Kindness is a reflection of God's kindness. Grumpiness reflects nothing of God.
 - Grumpiness is an attitude that sets the atmosphere to "tense."
 - Everyone needs to walk on egg shells when you're grumpy. Or you'll blow up.

D. Kindness Offers Forgiveness With A Heart Of Compassion

ie/ Gary Inrig, *Forgiveness*, tells the story of a man bitten by a dog which is later found to be rabid. This man was taken to the hospital for a battery of tests. The doctor, unfortunately, had to inform this man that he had rabies. Being the early days of medicine when there was no cure, this patient was told by the doctor to get his affairs in order because he couldn't cure him. The man sunk in despair, but later gained the energy to ask for a pen and made a list of names. When the doctor returned, he commended the patient for being so diligent in preparing a will. The patient responded, rabidly, "This ain't no will. This is a list of people I'm going to bite before I die."

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

- "forgiveness" = χαρίζομαι = *charizomai*
- forgiveness is not the precise meaning of the word
- Graciousness is the main emphasis, though forgiveness is included in this grander response

WHAT FORGIVENESS IS NOT:

1. Forgiveness Is Not A Feeling
2. Forgiveness Is Not Earned
3. Forgiveness Is Not Turning Your Back On The Situation
4. Forgiving Does Not Mean It Is Forgotten
5. Forgiveness Does Not Condone The Offense
6. Forgiveness Does Not Keep Score Of How Much We Forgive
7. Forgiveness Does Not Absolve Any Restitution Or Justice
8. Forgiveness Does Not Mean You Won't Feel The Hurt
9. Forgiveness Does Not Prevent The Offense From Ever Being Repeated

1. Forgiveness Is Not A Feeling

- "Forgiveness is not a feeling. It is an act of the will. Forgiveness involves a decision not to think or talk about what someone has done, and God calls us to make this decisions regardless of our feelings." (Sande, p. 187)
- Forgiveness is the act of accounting or recording history. 1 Corinthians 13:5 instructs us that "love keeps no record of wrong"
- Forgiveness is the releasing of a debt, not the removal of hurt.

2. Forgiveness Is Not Earned

- If this were so, we'd all still be bound to hell.
- Yet we feel the offender must beg, grovel or learn a lesson before we forgive them.

3. Forgiveness Is Not Turning Your Back On The Situation

- Stephen in Acts 7:60 when he was being stoned to death "Lord do not charge them with this sin." He called it a sin, but released them from the debt
- "Forgiveness is taking seriously the awfulness of what has happened when you are treated unfairly. Forgiveness is not pretending that things are other than the way they are." (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)
- "Forgiving doesn't mean ignoring an injustice or letting someone treat you badly. Remember that it's not a wimp's response. It takes a strong, courageous effort to make that move. Letting go of your grudges takes a great deal of moral muscle." (Charlotte vanOyen Wilvliet, Psychology Professor, Hope College, quoted in Zest Magazine, October 2000)

4. Forgiving Does Not Mean It Is Forgotten

- erasing from memory isn't forgetting means here
- never using the past sin against you is what forgetting means in light of forgiveness
- "Forgiveness does not equal forgetting. It is about healing the memory of the harm, not erasing it." Dr. Ken Hart, as quoted in Zest Magazine (UK), October 2000.
- The offense is permanently filed in your life's history, but forgiveness forbids the offense to dominate or control your life.

5. Forgiveness Does Not Condone The Offense

- Joseph pointed out that his brothers meant evil – he did not condone their sin
- Stephen – "do not charge them with this sin" – he called the crowd's murderous act a sin, not condoning their actions, but he released the spiritual and emotional debt of the offense

6. Forgiveness Does Not Keep Score Of How Much We Forgive

- Peter brought out a score card when asking how often he should forgive an offender – up to 7x?
- Malcolm Forbes: "Keeping score of old scores and scars, getting even and one-upping, always makes you less than you are."

7. Forgiveness Does Not Absolve Any Restitution Or Justice

- If someone breaks a window or runs into your car, there should be payment
- Forgiveness doesn't demand emotional restitution or restitution that will remove a grudge or bitterness

8. Forgiveness Does Not Mean You Won't Feel The Hurt

9. Forgiveness Does Not Prevent The Offense From Ever Being Repeated

- "Forgiveness is not a magic trick that allows us to control other people." (Robert D. Enright)

WHAT FORGIVENESS IS:

1. Forgiveness Is A Cancellation Of A Debt Resulting From An Injury

Colossians 2:13-14 ¹³And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

2. Forgiveness Grants A Full Pardon, Not A Probation

2 Corinthians 2:7 So that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.

- There is a time to forgive. A lengthy period of unforgiveness causes grief and defeat in the offender.
- Once forgiveness is given, the offense is not brought up again.

E. Kindness Is Considerate Towards Our Enemies Needs

Matthew 6:43-48 ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸ Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

- Consider why our enemies are our enemies
- They have some emptiness in their lives that they try to fulfill by hurting us
- They feel empty and don't have Christ filling up their lives – so they lash out
- Eg/ The kid that misbehaves in class – not personal to the teacher – the kid might be struggling with parents divorce or verbal abuse

- Eg/ The person that said or did something hurtful – probably has a very empty life at home when they're away from you. They speak in arrogance and defamation because they are jealous of what you have in Christ.

F. **Kindness Defines Our Reputation: What We Do Will Be Remembered More Than What We Say (Or Teach)**

Proverbs 31:26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of **kindness** is on her tongue.

- Augustine, in *Confessions*, as an unbeliever was more impressed with Ambrose's (famous preacher and bishop) kindness than by his skillful preaching:
 - "That 'man of God' received me like a father and expressed pleasure at my coming with a kindness most fitting in a bishop. I began to like him, at first indeed not as a teacher of the truth, for I had absolutely no confidence in your Church, but as a human being who was kind to me." (*Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford, 1992, p. 88)
- I remember Pastor Sen's kindness to me more than what he preached
- We might forget what people said to us during a funeral, maybe even what was preached – but we remember the acts of kindness
- People remember kind acts
 - After loss of a loved one
 - Don't remember sermon, but kind acts

G. **Kindness Is A More Effective Path Of Leadership Than Condescension**

Job 6:14 "He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

2 Chronicles 10:6-11 **6** Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, "How do you advise me to answer this people?" **7** And they said to him, "**If you will be good to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.**" **8** But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. **9** And he said to them, "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?'" **10** And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus shall you speak to the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us'; thus shall you say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's thighs. **11** And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'" (2

- Rehoboam, Solomon's son, forsook kindness in his leadership and preferred a malevolent dictatorship

H. **Kindness Will Be Rewarded**

Proverbs 21:21 Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor.

KINDNESS

Pass it on!

Give a flower Eat lunch with someone new
Listen with your heart Visit a sick friend
Clean a neighbor's walk Offer a hug
Give an unexpected gift Make a new friend
Pick up litter Say "hello" Call a lonely student
Open a Door Help carry a load Plant a tree
Pass a kindness on Share a snack
Cheer up a friend Thank a Teacher Lend a hand
Read to a young child Do a kind act daily
Leave a thank you note Offer your seat
Cycle courteously BE TOLERANT Let another go first
Bake cookies for firefighters Give a compliment
Help a student make friends Assist an adult
Give a balloon away Lend a classmate a pencil
Celebrate something every day Encourage a friend
Respect others Walk a dog Do a favor
Forgive mistakes Smile at someone new

www.actsofkindness.org

the random acts
of kindness foundation

Thy Loving Kindness (Maranatha Music)

Thy loving kindness
Is better than life
Thy loving kindness
Is better than life
My lips shall praise thee
Thus will I bless thee
I will lift up my hands
Unto thy name.