

Kind Love Part 5

Graciously Desiring and Doing Good to Others

1 Corinthians 13:4; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 3-14-2021

*Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,
- 1 Corinthians 13:4*

Trust and Love

We are living in interesting times. My conscious pursuit in preaching this year is to encourage and equip us all in light of the difficulties and hostilities that lie ahead in our country. The relevant question always is, 'What does God want me to do?' *Trust and love* are the bottom line of life. (Galatians 5:6) God calls us to trust in who He is and what He's done for us in Jesus (resting in Jesus, hoping in God). God calls us to love others like He loves us (in submission to His Word and will). 1 Corinthians 13 tells us what that love looks like. What is the 'kindness' that Paul is talking about here?

Kindness is graciously desiring and doing good to others, to their souls and to their bodies, in words and deeds, in public and in private, regardless of their sinful attitudes and actions, without hope or expectation of temporal reward, because of God's kindness to us, especially in Jesus, not only to satisfy temporal needs, but with a desire to satisfy spiritual needs, to the glory of the kind God.

1. Kindness is not natural.

As we've said before, the kind of 'kindness' (graciously desiring and doing good to others, even those who are unkind and ungrateful) God calls us to is not something that comes naturally and easily. Just telling people to 'be kind' doesn't make them kind! We think that 'kindness' is something common to most people, to one degree or another. So, it takes a revelation from God (ie, the Bible) to show us what kindness is and how far short we fall of it. (Romans 3:9-12) How can Paul say this? Why is kindness not natural to us and, indeed, absent in fallen mankind? Because 'natural kindness' is not done 'freely.'

2. Kindness is evidence of sonship.

Kindness (graciously desiring and doing good to others even the unkind and the ungrateful) is important because it is evidence of our being children of God. Again, there are things in society that are similar but not exactly the same, for instance, the 'pay it forward' concept. The kindness of God to us cannot be and should not be 'paid back' to God or in some sense a 'payment' to someone else. But we are to be kind to others like God is kind to us! (Luke 6:32-35) Kindness is something we all want and something we all notice when it is absent, but the 'great' people in this world aren't often great in the eyes of others because they are kind. Yet this is what God says is very much a part of being His child and showing ourselves to be His child.

3. Kindness is holiness.

Last week, I mentioned that this kindness that God commands is not simply 'being nice' or 'avoiding conflict.' It involves doing good even when it is hard and when it may not 'feel nice' to the other person and may create unwanted conflict. But it's not a 'telling it like it is and letting

the chips fall where they may' attitude either. This kindness is the life and love of God flowing through our lives. So it's important whether we see ourselves as 'fountains' or 'funnels.' (2 Corinthians 4:7-12) And the life of God seen in kindness will make us radically different from the world around us. This is what the Bible means when it calls us to be holy. (1 Peter 1:14-16) God calls us to be holy like He is holy. The surprising thing is that holiness and love (kindness) are closely related in God's Word and God's mind, but often not so closely related in ours. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-13) We need God to fill us in order for us to be kind. Which means we need God to make us holy like He is holy. Holiness refers to purity but it also means 'otherness' or 'uniqueness.' (Numbers 20:1-13) We are to be different by being kind like God is kind!

4. Kindness is for now and for eternity.

One important question is, 'In what ways are we to be kind? How are we to do good? Is it wrong to be concerned about physical and material needs when the vastly more important issues are spiritual and eternal?' The greatest terminal illness is spiritual, not physical. So the greatest good is spiritual or eternal good. In word and deed, we are to pursue both the temporal and eternal good of others. (Romans 12:14-21; Matthew 4:23; Acts 10:38) Kindness is passionate about eternal good while involved in temporal good.

5. Kindness requires action.

So, we are to be kind like God is kind. But, as we've said, this is not easy nor is it natural. So, there is a 'working out of our salvation' and a 'fight of faith' that has to take place in seeking to show the kindness of God to all those in our lives, including the unkind and the ungrateful. (Colossians 3:12)

How do we 'put on' kindness?

We have to go back to the good news of the gospel. (Romans 1:16)

- We give ourselves to the truth (pardon, position, promises) in faith.
- We surrender our will and our lives to God in hope. (present)
- We act on the truth (pray, practice, partner) in love.
- We don't give up or give in because of failure. (repeat)

Do you want to be kind like God is kind?

- Are you resting in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins?
- Are you pondering the truth of who you are in Christ and God's love for you?
- Are you pondering the great promises of God to you in Christ?
- Are you presenting your life to God to do His will each day?
- Are you praying for the Spirit to fill you and enable you to obey/love?
- Are you practicing what you know to do?
- Are you being encouraged by other believers?
- Are you repeating this 'fight of faith' even when you fail and not giving up?