

Love is Kind

The Characteristics of Love

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Normally on Sunday mornings I am over at Faith Church West and overseeing the two morning services that we have there. It's highly unlikely that there may be some in here who have no clue who I am so that's okay, likewise, I have a young couple in my small group over at Faith Church West that have never stepped foot on this campus over here. They've been coming to Faith West for eight months now so can you imagine that? God is blessing over there as well and there are people who don't know one another. We need to fix that tonight at Church Family Night. We'll all come together tonight. In addition to overseeing our congregation on the West side, I also oversee our Soul Care Ministries and our church-based seminary and if you don't know my name, my name is Brent Aucoin, one of the pastors here. I am thankful to serve you guys on the other side of the river here this week.

A few weeks back, I was talking to a friend who attended an eight year old church plant. He was telling me that they are up to 800 people in that church plant, like 100 people every year, eight years. He was telling me about the blessings of God. Do you know what my Cardinal's self was thinking? Do you know? Why isn't Faith Church West after eight months up to 800 people? You know, totally comparable situations: eight months, eight years. Totally comparable. Not at all. That's what I was thinking. How sinful is that? And don't you look all self-righteous at me when last night you were disappointed because you didn't get the biggest piece of cheesecake so we're all like the rest of us in that. But what is it in us that we struggle so much when we see others having blessings or successes? My team doesn't come in first. My church is not growing like blank. My job does not have the prestige or pay like whatever. Speaking of college students, this is our finals this week so shout out to Faith Church West. We're praying for you college students over there. I also told Alex, Isaac and Kyle, I told them I'd give them a shout out. So shout out to those guys over there. They knew I was preaching over here. They watch Livestream over there so that's what we do sometimes, many times.

How do you like actually being second or third or fourth or not even in the ranking compared to first place? If you were an Olympian, how would you like getting the silver rather than gold? Let's say that David Boudia a couple of years ago, gold medalist diver here in our church, instead of beating the Chinese diver for the gold, he missed the dive and he ended up getting the silver? What would it take for David to have said something

like the following, “You know, my Chinese diving friend nailed his dives consistently, his form was a thing of beauty, his timing was impeccable, his entry was spot-on. Indeed Qiu Bo performance was one of unmatched beauty today which I’ll cherish for my entire life and I want to know more about him.” What would it take for him to have said that? A gun to the head? Alcohol? Drugs? What would it take for us to rejoice with those who rejoice? When they have blessings that maybe we don't perceive that we have? When you perceive that someone has more than you, what prevents you from rejoicing with them? That's what we're wrestling with today.

Our church's theme this year is “Loving Our Neighbors.” So far we've tried to develop this concept biblically with three different teaching series. We started by talking about “Why Should I Care?” when we attempted to get to the issues of apathy and indifference. Then we worked our way verse-by-verse through “Loving the Way that Jesus Taught It” in the classic intimate passage on the Upper Room Discourse. As we began to get our heads around this, folks, we've studied this for all of this first year because the Bible is all about love. When Paul says “all of the law of Moses” and you realize when he says “all of the law of Moses” he's talking about Genesis through Deuteronomy, the first foundational parts of our Bible, when he says “all of the law of Moses is summed up in one word: love.” The Bible is all about love. When Paul also says, “God is working all things to the praise and glory of his grace,” not the praise and glory of his wrath, not the praise and glory of his justice, to the praise and glory of his grace, we understand that grace is a manifestation of his love for his people. So, whether the Scriptures are giving the descriptions of love, the basis of love, the motivations of love, explanations of love, demonstrations of love, applications of love or presenting the God of love, this is it: the glory of God for human beings is love. It is the glory of God that we have fallen short of as well. We have fallen short of love.

Remember in the Upper Room Discourse when we spent all that time on it, “My time of glory has now come” and his time of glory was where he was loving you, loving the people, to give his life for you. Glory. Love. Folks, it's all about that and so we want to study it more and we're going to be talking today about “The Characteristics of Love,” a series that Pastor Viars started last week. This is going to be a word-for-word study from the great love chapter in 1 Corinthians 13. Definitions that Pastor Viars mentioned last week when he contrasted the world's view of love with the biblical view, definitions matter. So, as we get that on the table again, biblical love is a choice of the will to sacrifice one's self for the needs of others or the benefit of others and for the motivation of the glory of God.

Now, that motivation is key there. We can talk about giving all we want and, in fact, our passage today will talk about giving. I can give my life for others. I can give all of my possessions for others. But there is something I’ve got to have: the right motivation in that as well. It's something I have or I don't have. For the glory of God, my focus on the well-being of others, I have that or I’m consumed with my own well-being so it doesn't matter if I give all of my possessions to the poor but if I don't have the motivation of thinking about the well-being of others for the glory of God, it's not love, you don't have it.

Turn now, if you will, to 1 Corinthians 13. That is page 137 in the New Testament, the back section of the Bible in the chair in front of you. 1 Corinthians 13. We'll start in verse 1 and read through verse 8. Here's what Paul says, recognizing that Paul was talking about the gift of tongues here. Pastor Viars gave us an explanation of that last week. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know everything," not that we could but "if I know everything and I have all knowledge; and if I have the gift of faith so as to remove mountains," not that anyone ever has. He's speaking hyperbolic here. "But do not have love," notice right here, it's a noun, I don't have something. Yes, he's going to talk about giving but I have something here as a noun. "I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." Now, here's what it is. Right here is what God is looking for in his people. "Love is patient." Last week, Pastor Viars talked to us about that being long-fused, long in suffering, long in taking it from people, taking people's evil and I'm long-fused in regard to the way that I respond to folks. I do not get sinfully angry. "Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant." Other men will be talking to you about those concepts next week. We're going to be focusing on "kind" and "is not jealous." "It does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails," and that's why love is the consummation of the story, the redemptive plan of the Scripture. It's all moving that way and what God is wanting to create in you but Paul needed to spend a whole chapter on it because it's no inherent in any of us. It requires a transformed heart.

So, in our time this morning, we're going to be talking about love is kind and it's not jealous and we want to organize our thoughts around these four points: 1. the relationship between love and kindness. 2. The relationship between love and not being jealous. 3. The reasons why Paul had to remind the Corinthians of this; why was he spending so much time on this. 4. We need to apply it to ourselves; the relevance to us today.

First, let's speak of the relationship between love and kindness. I know that Pastor Viars normally gives you the Greek word. I'm not going to give you the Greek word today because it doesn't make a whole lot of sense. It's only used one time in the entire New Testament. This word is only used one time. There is no other even example of this word in secular Greek literature so things that are not Scripture, they didn't use this word. So, what does it mean? Well, before we even get to that, many people think Paul made a word up. Did you know you could make words up? Did you know that? My son does that sometimes. Sometimes I would give my son just instructions and he would instead of saying okay, he would begin to say donshay, donshay. "Son, what is that word? I don't know what that means. I've never heard of that. I can't look it up, it's not in the dictionary." Donshay. He just made it up and he started saying it with all of his friends and all of his friends started saying it. It's kind of fun making up words if everybody else knows what they mean. For him, it meant okay or gotcha Dad, I understand, cool.

Let me give you another example, more serious: the word “save” or “saving” is a verb. God saves us. There is a noun form, salvation. There is no adjective form of this verb until I went to Central Seminary, Dr. M., who is a master wordsmith. He would make up words too and I think he coined the term “salvific” an adjective describing the kinds of qualities of saving grace, salvific gospel. My point is this: I think Paul may have invented a new word to capture his meaning: kinding. He didn't use the noun “kind,” he made up a verb “kinding.” I know that doesn't sound right to us because it's a new word: kinding, gooding, loving. Paul may have invented that. There was no verb existing out there that captured his intent. The noun form, we can look at the noun form and we can see that the noun form of this word means “the quality of being good or beneficial to somebody else or helpful to one another.” So, when I'm kinding to you, when I am gooding to you, I am being useful to you. Okay? I am being beneficial to you.

I think the clearest ways that we can begin to understand this is when it is actually used of God. His quality and it describes his quality of loyal commitment to do good to his people. Let me show you where that is in the text. The Old Testament is not written in Greek like the New Testament but this word that we're talking about has been used to translate some Old Testament words and that's why we can go to the Old Testament and see. In Psalm 52:8-9, here's what the Psalmist says, “But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever. I will give You thanks forever, because You have done it, And I will wait on Your name, for it is good,” there it is, there is the word. It's not translated “kind” here, it's translated “good.” But I want you to also notice the context in which it's found. It's in the context where it's also parallel with the word “lovingkindness.”

Now, those of you who know me, I love the Old Testament and I was so pumped up when I saw this verse because this verse has one of the most significant Old Testament words ever. Say chesed. You don't want to spit on your neighbor. Say chesed. Faith Church West, I want to hear you say chesed as well. Not really. Chesed. Say it again. Chesed. You don't know what you just said. I could have invented a word and you wouldn't have known it. Chesed is the word for God's covenant loyalty to his people to promise to bring them ultimate good in their lives. When Joseph was in distress, God brought him chesed. When David was wandering around in the wilderness he trusted ultimately in God's covenant loyalty to bring good. When the children of Israel had been disciplined because of their idolatry, they would cry out for God for his covenant loyalty to bring good in their lives. So, in this text right here, our word “good” is parallel there to that term “lovingkindness.” And you understand or maybe you don't understand but lovingkindness is an easy way to say “God's covenant loyalty to bring about good to his people.” You couldn't write that all in one word, you couldn't put all of that in there so they shortened it to lovingkindness or mercy. That's what it's talking about.

In the New Testament, the noun form goes like this: or do you think lightly of the riches of his loyalty to do good to his people, his tolerance and his patience because that loyalty to do good to his people is what leads you to repentance. God's kindness. Ephesians 2:7, “So that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness.” His covenant loyalty to his people to demonstrate his goodness to you and that

is ultimately defined here as “in Christ Jesus.” That is the ultimate demonstration and we see that again in Titus 3:4 and 5. But when the kindness of God appears, God our Savior and that's talking about the work and person of Jesus Christ, he saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness but according to his mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”

So, we are beginning to see what that term means with God. It is used of a character quality with God. He is kind. It is used regarding humanity as well. Unfortunately, however, when it's used in regard to humanity it says that there is nobody like this who does kindness. Here's what Romans 2 says, “All have turned aside together and they have become useless.” Notice the term “useless,” they're not beneficial for one another, they're not bringing goodness to one another. “There is none who does good.” That's why God is in the business of transforming us to rectify that. “There is not even one,” is what he says. But in his people he expects it to come out. In Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,” there it is. In Colossians 3:12, “So as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved put on the heart of compassion and kindness,” there it is again.

So, let's summarize to get our head around this term. This term means this: in the context of God's kindness, his covenant faithfulness to act for the well-being of his people. That's what it means. And for us: I am kind, inventing a word there, I am kind when I am loyally doing good to an image-bearer of God because I'm concerned about their well-being. That's what it's about.

Now, press the pause button for a moment before we apply all of this. I've got to develop another term for you. Not jealous. Love is not jealous and it's not going to be an entirely different concept. All of these terms relate to love. Therefore, in some way they all have a relationship to each other. I'm going to try to draw that out as you begin to see what love is not jealous is all about. So, love, the relationship between love and not being jealous. Here's what to not be jealous means: it means to not lust after another's perceived or real well-being. Somebody gets something better than you. Somebody has a larger church than you. Somebody gets a raise and you didn't. Somebody gets an A and you didn't. Somebody has a better body than you. Somebody has better looks than you. Whatever it may be, to not be jealous means to not lust after another's perceived or real well being. Their good, their accomplishments, their successes, their possessions, their skill, their health, their peace, their joy, their relationships, their fame. And that is hard. That is hard.

There are examples of that in Scripture. Acts 7:9, the patriarchs, when Stephen is about to give his life as a martyr, he's rehearsing the story of Israel and when he's about to give his life to the jealous Pharisees he says this, “The patriarchs became jealous of Joseph.” Joseph had more good favor bestowed upon him by their father than any of the other brothers and they wanted that. They perceived they had a lack or they had a lack of good standing and they perceived that and, therefore, they were jealous of Joseph and, therefore, they acted not kindly to him but based upon their own benefit. Another example: as Paul was going through and establishing churches, he was building a church, the Pharisees, the Judaizers, saw what he was doing. They saw that Paul was getting

converts to his movement, early Christianity. They weren't getting as many converts and some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women but the Jews becoming jealous of what they perceived was a benefit, the blessings that Paul had, lusting after what they had, they were envious. So, to not be envious means to not lust after another's perceived or real well-being: their good, their accomplishments, their successes or possessions, their skills, health, joy, peace or relationships or fame.

We can be all negative about that but let me show this to you positively: positively it's kindness. If kindness seeks to loyally do good to another person because of a concern for their well-being, then not being jealous means positively, folks, if they're getting goodness, if they are getting blessings whatever they may be and I'm concerned about their well-being, then I will rejoice. I will rejoice. That is so hard because we're so jealous. Do you understand that connection? Kindness: I'm concerned about your well-being and I loyally act good for that. But the test comes where they have a blessing greater than I do or at least I perceive it and I don't rejoice with them. There is a relationship there.

Love is kind, loyally doing good to an image-bearer of God because I'm concerned about their well-being. And love is not jealous, rejoicing when an image-bearer of God is perceived to have benefits. Why did the Corinthians need to hear this? Why do we need to hear this? Let me do a rehearsal for you of why Paul needed to remind the Corinthians of this love because it's not natural. We're mostly concerned about our own benefit from morning when we get up until evening when we go to bed. This kind of love is unnatural, it is supernatural that we have to begin to have a transformed heart and in that regard, the Corinthians did. They were believers but they had forgotten the ways that Christ had shown this kind of love.

So, why did Paul have to remind them? Let's do a little rehearsal. Paul was the founder of the Corinthian church. He had come to Corinth weak, tired. He was running from the Judaizer who was chasing him, essentially persecuting him. If you know the geography, he came down from the north in Thessalonika, crossed a body of water and then landed in Corinth and he was weak and he was tired. Now, if you will, please turn to 1 Corinthians 2:1. You're in 13, turn to 1 Corinthians 2:1. Notice what he says, "And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech." Paul came and he was weary, he was tired. All he did was basically preach the gospel and demonstrate the authenticity of the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit and miracles. That's what he did. He didn't debate. He didn't do any kind of fancy speeches. He just presented the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit and did a few signs and wonders there.

"And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God." Paul ministered and built the church

there at Corinth for about 18 months and then he was a church planter, he had to move on. He moved over to Ephesus, just to the east. Then somebody else came in, a good man, a good man named Apollos. Don't turn here but I'm going to read you something. "Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man." He was the guy who could debate anybody into a corner. "This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord," and when he wanted to go across to Corinth, the brother said go. He powerfully refuted the Jews and he demonstrated the Scriptures powerfully with a lot of good argumentation, debating people into the corner.

So, here you have two well, good servants of Christ, Paul and Apollos. One faithfully preaches the gospel, demonstrates the gospel by miracles and another, God has gifted him in oratory skill. What happens with the immature believers? "I like Paul." "I like Apollos." Well, if you guys like Paul and Apollos, you guys don't have anything, I like Jesus. Who is spiritual in that crowd? None of them. Folks, what was going on here ultimately: the Corinthian's jealousy, they heaped themselves teachers, "I like Brent." "I like Pastor Viars." "I like Rob Green. I wish Brent would go back over to Faith West." Yeah, you guys love me over there, don't you, Faith West? Alright.

The reason that Paul needed to teach them about love again, their jealousy. Their jealousy. Secondly also, please turn over to 1 Corinthians 5. The Corinthians' unkindness in allowing an unrepentant man to remain in that state was unkind. There was apparently an immoral man among them that was unrepentant. Paul was not disturbed so much by that immorality as he was the lack of kindness in the church. The leaders of the church were not thinking of what had consumed that man and to appropriately deal with that man who needed to be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his soul may be saved. And the church was not thinking also about the purity of the church. They were acting unkindly. 1 Corinthians 5:1, Paul says, "It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife. You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst. For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present." Verse 5, "I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved." That was going to be his long-term benefit and for the church also. True, the Corinthians' unkindness in allowing the unrepentant immoral man there in 1 Corinthians 5.

Turn to another passage. Turn over a page, 1 Corinthians 6, the Corinthians' unkindness was leading to divisive lawsuits as well. Look at verse 1, "Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to court?" Really, seriously, before the secular courts "and not before the saints of the church? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged?" You're not thinking of the benefit of the others and even the church. Why not

rather, not think of your own benefit? Think of others. Kindness, love was the antidote there.

You know also the Corinthians' unkindness was causing weaker brothers to stumble. They were using their liberties. In 8-11, they were using it for their own benefit, not the benefit of others and, therefore, Paul rebukes them in regard to why are you making these kinds of decisions that are going to cause others to stumble? Finally, what Pastor Viars also mentioned to us last week: the Corinthians' jealousy over certain spiritual gifts was creating chaos. They saw one in public who had a public platform. The gift of tongues, "Man, I want that one. He gets all the attention. He has the good gift. There is a guy with prophecy who gets a word from God and everybody clamors to him. I want that gift." The jealousy there. This is why Paul was talking to them.

Here's the summary: the individual at Corinth regarded and rejoiced first in his own benefit. That's what he did. He regarded and thought about, meditated on day in and day out, his own benefit, his own well-being rather than the well-being of another. Please notice: when I'm consumed first and foremost with my own well-being and then I notice somebody else who maybe has a little bit more than me, I'm going to go right after that person and then I'm going to start working to be like them because I want more well-being. That creates a perceived lack in your own until you be like that other one so you work toward making sure that you have what that other person has. You have the gifts, you have the respect, you chase after that. Then you're satisfied, right? No, until you see the next one who has a little bit more than you.

Folks, what this is is self-love. I love myself and my well-being more than I am concerned about yours. I'm going to say this: that is a high self-esteem. I'm more concerned about myself and my well-being and a high self-esteem will never produce agape love. I know in our world of high self-esteem and when we debate about the notion of self-esteem, we struggle to understand that and we attribute low self-esteem to the underlying causes of every ailment in society but the problem in mankind is not low self-esteem, it is we regard our well-being more than another's. Here's what C. S. Lewis says, "Pride gets not pleasure out of having something, only out of having more than somebody else." Tim Keller says this, "Pride is the pleasure of being more than the next person."

We have a love affair with being better than the next person. We are bent to take delight in receiving more well-being than somebody else. Here's what we do: we develop strategies on how to communicate and live that out in our pride. Sometimes the strategies are overt, braggadocious and arrogant like this: what does the winning team do when they make a touchdown? What do they do? Spike the football. What does that communicate? We're better than you and at the games, we make even little emblems. What do we put up? I'm #1. I suppose it's not this, that would be loser, but number 1. We hold up emblems of our superiority. We are number one. When somebody tells a story about a fun, memorable experience to make conversation with you, what do we have to do? "Oh, let me tell you, remember, here's what I did. Here's what I did and here's my funny story." I'm one-upping. Why? Because I have to be better.

So, overt strategies to make sure we're securing our positions of well-being but it's not always so overt, many times it's very subtle. Very subtle strategies such as self-pity. Listen to this: self-pity is the proud response of an individual who does not immediately see that he's better than somebody else. Did you get that? Sometimes we think that the low self-esteem person, the self-pity person is, "Ah, he's so humble and meek." No, no. He's still regarding himself. The self-pity is a proud response of an individual who does not immediately see that he or she is better than somebody else. We don't rejoice in the blessings of others who do not recognize our lack. Self-pity is that form of proud response of the individual who does not immediately see that he is better.

So, folks, we have a love affair with being better than the next person. We are bent to take delight in receiving more well-being than somebody else. And just note that there will always be that next person. That's where Jesus and the gospel comes in, the great equalizer. Think about this for just a moment: Jesus is the antidote to all of this self-regard. Here was a man, the God-man, who left the glories of heaven, who was better than all of you and me. He was the Creator of the universe. He had no regard for his position but he left it thinking of your benefit when he died on the cross. He came down here for you. That is the great equalizer. We're not to think low of ourselves or high of ourselves or more than somebody else. We're not to think of ourselves and our well-being and the reason why many times as churches the way it is is because you have grown in that. And I praise the Lord for all the folks around here who are consistently growing in kindness, putting other's good ahead of their own and rejoicing with those who have perceived blessings or real blessings as well.

How? What is the relevance for us today as we close? How does one grow in kindness and not being jealous? Folks, this is not something that we can simply start sticking onto us like a sticky note that will make us kind or make us not jealous. We don't staple love onto us and in some way become transformed. Paul spends an entire chapter explaining love in Corinthians. We have spent the first quarter of this year talking about love. We have found it ultimately necessary to meditate on an extended time on the way Jesus loved. Love requires a fundamental transformation of the heart so that I want it, I see it, I value it and in us, before that happens, something has to die. Here is what it is. We studied the way Jesus loved in the Upper Room Discourse but there's a verse that precedes John 13, don't turn there but listen, there is something in us that has to die before we love like we've been talking about here. John 12:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone." Something has to die before something bears fruit, the kind of fruit of love that we're talking about here. And remember, throughout all the Upper Room Discourse, my disciples will bear fruit. Stay in me. Stay in me. But Christ had to die first before he bore fruit. "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life," his well-being right now, "loses it, and he who hates his life," has no regard for himself now, has no regard for his own well-being now, he is the one who is going to keep it."

I have to die to something. God wants us to die like his Son did, focusing not on his immediate well-being but on the well-being of others, kindness. So what do we need to do? What do we need to do? Recognize your personal clamoring after your own benefits at the expense of others. Every day, moment-by-moment. How do you wake up in the morning? Do you think of how good this day is going to be for you? What is good about this day for you? What am I going to do that is going to benefit me today? Or do I think, today, what ultimately, how can I be kind to another? Secondly, repent. I know we know around here repent. We say it enough, turn. I'm going to say it differently: die. What do I need to die to? Moment-by-moment of every day like our Savior, not taking regard for his own well-being today.

I was struck. You say, "Brent, if we do this, we may not have any joy in life, really. I mean, if I can't take pleasure of things in my life, my benefits, my well-being, my pleasures of this earth, will there be any joy in life?" God is wanting to elevate our desires to something that is greater, to finding our satisfaction in the love of others and the whole well-being of others and not our pursuit or enslavement to our own temporal well-being. Yesterday I was struck. I could have been enjoying the sun, the pleasures of the sun. It was a beautiful day yesterday, right? How many of you guys were outside yesterday in some way, shape or form? I was at a grave site. I was watching the soldier who had spent 11 weeks training Aurek Rardin and I'm praising the Lord that Aurek had a testimony of Christ and he lived it. But apparently the soldier had gotten a little bit close to Aurek. He was the final soldier to give the salute to Aurek before we left the graveside and after he gave his salute he just lost his composure. He lost whatever military decorum you're supposed to have and he just wept. He didn't know Aurek for that long but apparently Aurek had touched him in some way. All of this, it is better to be in the house of mourning that day than the house of feasting but here's what was striking to me: when the soldier lost his composure, Brent, the father who had lost his 20 year old son, went up not thinking of his own loss but went up and just embraced that soldier. That's kindness. Not thinking of his own well-being because he knew that God had ultimately taken care of Aurek's well-being and he knew that God had already taken care of his own well-being so he was resting. Resting in Christ's promises that he's got your good covered.

"If I don't look out for my own good, who will?" God has and he will continue to. He will. And he wants you to experience a greater delight than just pursuing your own benefits, that of wholly giving yourself to the benefit of others and then you start relinquishing that grasp so that you can practice loyally doing good to others. Tomorrow, today, will you think not first how will this day benefit me, what are the things that I will organize or strategize around my life to benefit me and my own well-being, how can I ultimately be a benefit to others? Practice this, on this next one, this week, when somebody tells you a story about the blessings in their life, about what God is doing and accomplishments in their life, here's what you say, "Tell me more about that. I want to hear more. I would like to praise God with you," instead of redirecting the attention to yourself. Then, watch how delightful this is, relish the joy and freedom that ensues.

Love is kind. Love is not jealous.

