

Title: Be Kind (Kindness - The Fruit of the Spirit sermon series)

Passage: Micah 6:6-8

“With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” 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?

Overview:

- I. Biblical definition
- II. Practical aspects of kindness
- III. Related points
- IV. Application

I. Biblical definition

- in Old Testament: "hesed" = loving kindness (also translated grace, mercy)
- in New Testament: "christos" (Gal 5:22) = to furnish what is suitable/useful to someone; "philantopia" = love towards people that is shown in a practical way
- General definition: Sincere desire for the happiness of others
- Biblical: the inner disposition that is created by the Holy Spirit that causes us to be sensitive to the needs of others (whether physical, emotional, or spiritual)

A. God's kindness to us/others around us

1) God is kind to all humankind

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.*

2) God's kindness is particular to those who are saved

Ephesians 2:4-5

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved
Tit 3:4-5

3) Once saves those who believe in Him, God's kindness keeps us saved/holy

Ro 11:22

Jesus' example: kind to those who believe in Him but also to others around.

- Jesus prayed for the disciples that they would not fall.

Definition of Divine Kindness: Having a sincere, heartfelt desire and sensitivity for the happiness of others, including those we do not have an affinity for including family, neighbors, and others.

II. Practical Aspects of Kindness

A. Kindness = tender heartedness

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?

- kindness = heartfelt quality, attitude from within

Ephesians 4:22; 31-32

to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires...Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

- context: chapter 4 speaks to the personal, practical transformation of a Christian's life

- Be kind to another, tender hearted = kindness comes from within

B. Kindness = being quick to forgive

- Biblical forgiveness: forgiveness can be given even when another has not asked for it.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you

Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Ephesians 4:31

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice

- "let all" = passive tense (meaning: it is the Holy Spirit produced in you; not result of some action on your part)

2 Corinthians 6:4-6

but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;

- only through the Holy Spirit supernaturally working in a person can one respond to hardship with kindness (instead of vengeance)

III. Related Points

Motive is key: Kindness is not merely about good actions

- Contrast: worldly kindness

- worldly kindness does good to essentially appease one's own conscience (to feel good about oneself, works-based righteousness)

- this robs of glory and credit that rightly belong to God as all that is kind comes from Him and points to Him.

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

- good actions absent motive that honors God is empty and will actually be held against someone.

Kindness and conflict

- kindness does not mean never to confront another or be in anger. It is not the absence of friction.

Hebrews 10:24

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

- righteous anger = confront another out of sincere motive to restore and not tear down, out of mercy

Romans 11:31

so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.

Kindness has to do with attitude of heart and deed

James 2:15-17

If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 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? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

IV. Application

Consider God's kindness to us everyday

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?

Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,