



1. We understand biblical kindness when we look to God and his word as our source and our example for kindness.

Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology defines kindness as: An attribute of God and quality desirable but not consistently found in humans. [The article goes on to say that] The main problem in understanding kindness is the fact that it is one of a series of terms that are overlapping and not clearly or consistently distinguishable in meaning. This is true not only in English (kindness, goodness, mercy, pity, love, grace, favor, compassion, gentleness, tenderness, etc.) but also in Greek.

In other words it is often hard to distinguish between the actions of God. Is this mercy or kindness? Love or grace? And this blurring of

the lines is what you will observe in the various translations where you may find that the word translated kindness in one may be translated goodness in another or steadfast love or possibly mercy in another.

An example in Micah 6:8:

- (Micah 6:8 NASB95) He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love **kindness**, And to walk humbly with your God?
- (Micah 6:8 NKJV) He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love **mercy**, And to walk humbly with your God?

An example in Proverbs 3:3:

- (Proverbs 3:3 NASB95) Do not let **kindness**

- and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.
- (Proverbs 3:3 ESV) Let not **steadfast love** and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

How do we explain this? First, this should not be troubling to us. This is merely us trying to understand things which are ultimately beyond us—the work of an infinite God in the lives finite humans whom he has redeemed. The Spirit is making sinners godly ... conforming us to and transforming us into the image of his Son ... which can sometimes defy human explanation.

- (Romans 8:29 ESV) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- (1 Corinthians 15:49 ESV) Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, **we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven**.
- (1 John 3:2–3 ESV) Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but **we know that when he appears we shall be like him**, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

So what we see is the life of God in our lives—aka the fruit of the Spirit. So we will set out with our limitations in mind:

The Greek word is *χρηστότης* [chrestotes] and is translated as goodness, kindness, good and gentleness. It means moral goodness, integrity; benignity, kindness. [Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.]

Benignity means kindness or tolerance toward others; the quality or condition of being kind and gentle.

But as it was previously with love, joy, peace

and patience, we really find our understanding of kindness in how it is used in the Bible, and that is what we will do again this morning as we see that God is our source and our example of kindness in character and in action.

A. God’s kindness to us is intentional—our salvation is a result of the kind intention (the good pleasure) of his will.

... the kind intention of His will ... (Ephesians 1:5 NASB95) He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

... the good pleasure of His will ... (Ephesians 1:5 NKJV) Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

The word used here for “kind intention” and “good pleasure” is the Greek work *εὐδοκία*. It is translated as good pleasure and good will. It means will, choice; a good will, kindly intent, benevolence; and delight, pleasure, satisfaction. [Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.]

... according to His kind intention ... (Ephesians 1:9 NASB95) He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him [Christ].

... according to His good pleasure ... (Ephesians 1:9 NKJV) Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.

B. God’s kindness to us—his kind intention or good pleasure—in our salvation is sacrificial.

- (Hebrews 9:26b ESV) But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
- (Hebrews 10:12 ESV) But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins,

he sat down at the right hand of God.

C. God's kindness is our example to follow as sons of the Most High.

• (Luke 6:35–36 ESV) 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. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

• (Ephesians 5:2 ESV) And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

D. God's kindness to us is abundant and eternal—he saved us that he might show us his kindness forever.

• (Ephesians 2:4–7 ESV) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

2. We live lives of biblical kindness as we follow the biblical instruction, and the Spirit produces his fruit in our lives.

This is godliness. We submit to God's teaching, and the Spirit produces godliness in our lives.

A. We need to know what biblical kindness is—the biblical nature and character of kindness.

i. Biblical kindness is a distinguishing quality or characteristic of the person who walks by

the Spirit.

• (Galatians 5:22) ...

ii. Biblical kindness is biblical love.

• (1 Corinthians 13:4a ESV) Love is patient and kind ...

iii. And biblical love is laying our lives down for others.

• (1 John 3:16 ESV) By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

B. We need to submit to the biblical instruction and pursue a life of kindness.

i. We should understand biblical kindness as intentional obedience, not merely random acts.

• (Colossians 3:12–15 ESV) Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

• (Ephesians 4:29–32 ESV) Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 *[Instead]* Be

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

• (1 Peter 2:1–3 NASB95) Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

ii. We should love kindness and the effect of true kindness.

• (Micah 6:8 ESV) 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?

• (Psalm 141:5a ESV) Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it.

iii. We should pursue kindness as we would pursue life.

• (Proverbs 21:21 ESV) Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor.

iv. We should cling to kindness.

• (Proverbs 3:3 NASB95) Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

3. We do not presume on the riches of God's kindness when we allow his kindness to bring us to repentance and thus escape his judgment.

Presume means to undertake with unwarrantable boldness; to act or proceed with unwarrantable or impertinent boldness; to suppose to be true without proof; to go too far in acting unwarrantably or in taking liberties.

A. God's kindness is meant to lead us to repentance.

• (Romans 2:3–5 ESV) Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 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? 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

B. Resisting God's kindness results in ears that do not hear and hard hearts that are oblivious to God's word and God's judgment.

• (Zechariah 7:8–12 ESV) And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, 9 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, 10 do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” 11 But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. 12 They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of hosts.

LIFE: For those who receive the kind intention of the will of God—the gospel of Jesus Christ—he will show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness in the coming ages, i.e. forever ... throughout eternity.

DEATH & JUDGMENT: However, God's kind intention and forbearance and patience end at death for the unrepentant. Only judgment is left for hard hearts.