

# The Kindness of God

by Duane Troyer

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and experiencing the kindness of God in our lives, leading to repentance and growth. It highlights how God's kindness, though convicting, is a powerful force that should shape our interactions with others, reflecting Christ's love and mercy. Through personal testimonies and reflections, the sermon encourages a deep appreciation for God's kindness and the transformative impact it can have on our lives.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 103:2, Exodus 34:6, Romans 2:4, 1 Peter 2:1, Psalm 34:8, Psalm 103:8, Psalm 103:10, Psalm 34:8, Psalm 34:8, Psalm 103:13, Psalm 34:8

**Topics:** "God's Kindness", "Transformation through Repentance"

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## Description

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## Transcript

May grace be with you, peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, I really appreciated the thoughts shared there in the opening and some of it was not new thoughts some of it was some of it was like oh yeah moments for me too so I really appreciated that let's let's stand for a reading of Psalm 103 those who want to can stand it's 102 in the Septuagint 103 in the Masoretic text bless the Lord oh my soul and everything within me bless his holy name bless the Lord oh my soul and forget not all his rewards who is merciful to all your transgressions who heals all your diseases who redeems your life from corruption who crowns you with mercy and compassion who satisfies your desires with good things and your youth is renewed like the Eagles the Lord shows mercies and judgment to all who are wrong he made known his ways to Moses the things he will to the sons of Israel the Lord is compassionate and merciful slow to anger and abounding in mercy he will not become angry to the end nor will he be wrathful forever he did not deal with us according to our sins nor reward us according to our transgressions for according to the height of heaven from earth so the Lord reigns in mercy over those who fear him as far as the East is from the West so he removes our transgressions from us as a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him for he knows how he formed us he remembers we are dust as for man his days are like grass as a flower of the field so he flourishes for the

wind passes through it and it shall not remain and it shall no longer know its place but the mercy of the Lord is from age to age upon those who fear him and his righteousness upon children's children to such as keep his covenant and remember his commandments to do them the Lord prepared his throne in heaven and his kingdom rules over all bless the Lord all you his angels mighty and strength who do his word so as to hear the voice of his words bless the Lord all you his hosts his ministers who do his will bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion bless the Lord oh my soul let's pray oh God we thank you for this opportunity to be here and for all your wonderful works to us that you care for us even though we are but dust for your great compassion in spite of your great power and we thank you for all these things we pray that you would be in our midst today in this assembly that you would guide our thoughts and help us to have ears to hear and hearts to understand and that you would speak to us in Jesus name amen yeah I want to talk today a little bit about just just about the kindness of God and that that psalm was was full of ways that that God is just plain kind he is a kind and a good God and I I hope I sent out that text message last night about giving giving an opportunity here for people for brothers to briefly share some some point in their life or some something or some time in their life which they tasted the kindness of God and we'll get to that in just a minute and if there might be some people here who weren't on that texting thread if if you want to share something like that you will pass the mic around and and we can do that if you want to and anybody that doesn't really want to doesn't have to feel obligated to but I think it's just important that we don't forget the kindness of God that we that we recognize it let's put it that way that we acknowledge it that we recognize it in in the things that we see in our life that happen in our life that we recognize and acknowledge the kindness of God as the psalmist here said forget not all his benefits David says in Psalms 34 taste and see that the Lord is good taste and see that the Lord is good and you see this like like David expresses this through his I believe the Psalms most of the Psalms are written by David and most of them are his the his expressions in his meditations in his prayer life and and you see this thing echoing through it just just like an echo going back and forth back and forth as you read through the Psalms about the loving kindness of God his tender mercies his goodness all the things he does for us now is it because David's life was just always pleasant everybody treated him nicely with dignity with respect he never went cold he never went hungry he never he never suffered from the judgment of God on his wrong decisions and failures far from it far from it but but I think David saw in in all this behind all these things that he went through he saw the kindness of God he saw behind all these things of God that was slow to anger and plenty of in mercy and that if it was not for his kindness we would all together be consumed I think he saw that that even even the things that he suffered were meant for his good and and therefore he could just say this over and over again and I have a feeling probably he didn't always feel it and yet he expressed it knowing knowing intellectually even if he can't feel it that there is the kindness of God again doing something good for me so let's um let's I have more thoughts to share but I think maybe this is a good time to just pass the mic around and and if you have if you thought of something since you read that text that just to briefly mention something now I'm not asking for a long testimony just mentioned something something or some time that you tasted the kindness of God I'll start I thought of like answered prayers is one of those things just when it when it's a plain answer to prayer it's the kindness of God there was but it's about ten years now since we since we left the Amish and I went through a time of such utter confusion I remember one time one evening meeting with the other ministers and I was confused they knew I was confused one of the ministers said something that just added fear to my confusion of being confused and I wept all the way home I didn't want to be confused and the next day was Saturday and I I just I just really planned that God would just send someone to help me I was so I was so at a loss for answers sorry and I needed to go cut firewood out in the woods that day and I didn't really plan to meet anybody but I just just wanted someone I didn't care if it was a stranger or an acquaintance somebody who can who could shed

a little bit of light at the end of the day there was someone who just someone ran out of milk and came to came to buy milk from us and I was out in the barn doing chores and he just walked in the barn and I I was wide-eyed like oh the Lord is gonna answer my prayer after all and yeah he just he just his brother just shared some things that were so helpful and so insightful in shared some some a few things that were just so helpful for my immediate situation that it's just like that was God's God's answer direct answer to a plea in a prayer that I had sorry I didn't know I get choked up saying that but that that's what came to my mind when I thought of something specific where I tasted the kindness of God so if you want to just share something that that you thought about maybe you just is the mic there with you David you won't just give it to Walter and we'll just or maybe maybe give it to Walter jr. we'll just go this way okay okay you can start with Walter senior yeah there's been many thoughts went through my mind I wasn't I was just thinking I said oh and I thought you know my my whole life from from being a baby God is merciful and things that happened to me up certain times I fell down like from the height of a ceiling to the ground and my mom picked me up limp and I I guess it knocked me out or something I'm not sure but I live the Lord was merciful he's just thinking all up through my life how many times he was merciful and and even the even different times when I don't know getting out of systems it is very difficult to to and so in doing was sharing some things that some more thoughts came in in those kind of ways of how he would give me peace in very remember the time there when we left Holland or relieving or not not yet leaving but it's just like I have peace and and I just left it in God's hands I believe this is mercy he I should have been all in torn up I should have been all twisted up but his mercy his kindness and and then real briefly I think every day today his mercy and his kindness is upon us that we need to be thankful I want to be thankful rejoicing in daily daily things another thing that came to my mind I'm going way over my minute but I remember often that somebody reminded different times been reminded my life I should write in the book all the things that happened in the week or in the day when it time when it happens I never do it and I don't I'd probably have a whole book full but not on have any but I just know little things that happen even after moving down here nine years ago there's many little things that kept happening and just seemed like God was hand crafting things anyways God is merciful in early 2012 I was supposed to make the transition from co-pilot to to captain and we were at a family function and Lisa's aunt who's a medical doctor was talking with her and then just thought of the blue said have you had have you had your thyroid checked and my wife was like why and she said well I can see it it's it's protruding out of your neck and my wife kind of got faint and sat down and long story short as it turned out I was I was I had to leave town but we we got it checked up on and it was full of tumors the thyroid was full of tumors and it it was up and then when I came back in town it was counseled to us that we should remove the whole thing which would mean that Lisa would be on medicine for for the rest of her life the thyroid produces a hormone I think that regulates our our metabolism anyway we we prayed a lot about it as it happens because of that that transition I had they didn't have the staffing to get me through part of the training so I wound up with several weeks off and we elected to so I was home and we elected to only take out half of the thyroid the worst part because we wanted to give it a chance to still make enough hormone to regulate Lisa's body and and we were told that's fine but you'll probably have to take out the other half someday or maybe even right away and it's probably not gonna make enough hormone and but we we did it we left some in there and she's she's I had that time off to be with her and help her recover we had a new baby and and she has never needed hormone since then or any kind of pill and and to this day I guess we we haven't had to take it out maybe someday in the future but I just I just attribute that to the kindness of the Lord and I'm thankful for it hallelujah in 1996 I I remember specifically being in San Francisco and I I don't know why but I something was going on in my heart and I got down on my knees and I was I was just crying like a little baby and I asked the Lord for a son and then in 2009 I got married which was 12 years later or so and then seven

years later after being married we had a son and I always look back and I just think I think about all those times in the Bible where Moses or Abraham or somebody they pray this prayer and then 30 years go by and and he answers the prayer but we had the name picked out for our son before we had any children so every time a baby was born we were like here comes Uriah and it was Malia here comes Uriah and it was Simca so I'm very thankful to have children I never thought I'd have children so it's really it really is just this sweet blessing that the Lord has put into my life and I'm so thankful yeah I could I could say that there's there's been a lot of blessings along the way but I think there's one in particular that stuck out in my mind and this was this is right at the beginning of my search I had a I had a pretty drastic separation from from a lot of my my friends at that time that I would have been interacting with and they I don't think I really saw anybody for like a year I didn't really I didn't really leave in in an ill manner from them but but they they probably didn't hear anything from me but I started I started to read scripture and practically tried to apply some of the principles and things that that I could read from the New Testament and and I came across I came across the part where Jesus was talking about anybody that had anger in his heart towards his brother or sister it's the same as he killed him and I took that very literally and so I I prayed that that he would show me how how to forgive the friends that I had chosen to leave who I'd known had done me some pretty drastic wrong and and that was there was one person in particular that I that I wanted to be able to forgive and and I just kept reading scripture and I think a whole I think maybe a month went by and I I just I had a really good thought about this person one day and it was enough to bring me to tears and I I realized at that moment that like I had forgiven them and that I didn't need to hold anything against them and and I realized that they through sincere prayer God will God will answer and and every day every day I would think he has he's answered lots of prayers that that I probably wouldn't have had answers for and and so I just I just think God is good and is worthy to be praised so there is one time when I feel like when you say tasted tasted that the Lord is good I remember this was when I was still living okay when I was still living when I was on the streets like the Lord just made me homeless I was seeking the Lord I remember I just talked to this man it was a beautiful day outside I just talked to this man and I felt like God was just spoke through that man to me and I remember I got up I was done talking with him and I was walking away and it was like it was like God opened the windows and it was just I was so happy I was so peaceful like I was walking down the road like like they're like litter I'm sure if someone seen me they were like what it what is up with this kid and then I get more down the road and I see this guy under under a bridge he was holding this sign just doing this and like I get closer and like that guy was so happy and I get closer and had a song signed on it I was like whoa I get closer to this guy and I look at him he looks at me and we just started laughing it was like I think that was the most holiest laugh I've ever had it's like he knew what I was thinking and I knew what he was thinking and I was just like wow and I went I gave him a hug I just gave the guy a hug and I was like okay man and I just walked away and um the Lord is really good just I'm all that he just I can stand here right now and look at you guys you know it's like how'd he do it it's um he's amazing three years ago I didn't know if I'd ever have my family back together and and now I have my family here with me and yeah God is good and merciful so thank you imagine how dramatic is the other brothers but one minute right one minute buddy but back in 86 I started driving for the Arizona Republic I lived in Phoenix and I was only 25 years starting driving for the newspaper Arizona Republic a morning driver even used their truck and I did that for some time and then I said I think I can expand my horizons because my knees weren't that good so I went to a auto auction Manheim Auto Auction in South Southwest Auto Auction in South Phoenix it was a bad part of town there but it was okay I did it but anyway I didn't know how to drive a standard you know city boy just you know automatic so I didn't happen so they said you got to learn if you're gonna drive the automobiles to the auction bond so I took me a couple of weeks and I had confidence and so anyway there was this lady there that she was in the office

and the other people there the young workers you know they said don't even say hi to this woman she's a lesbian and she wants to hit another young girls and just leave her don't don't even don't even talk to this lady because she was she'd come by and you know people have to something like this and she would ask things and but I was always polite to her and kind to her this is how you know I was a professed Christian then I was just baptized a few years ago I'm not going to Church of Christ but anyway so after driving through the the Autobahn there with the standard the stick and I had a fender bender in the auto auction a fender bender and so they sent me home and so I said oh boy what am I gonna do now I need work you know I quit my job at the young newspaper justice is better and it says here I am back it's square one ground zero got to find work and you know I feel am I gonna die I'm gonna be homeless when I'm gonna die what's going on in this and so I got a call I think it was it showed up Monday morning and say hey this is Bob from my southwest auto auction he's the older guy in charge he says would you like to come back and be a security guard in the employees parking lot and I said well sure and he said we can give you five eights and I said well how much can I have four tens you know four tens and then just have a three-day week he says have your way yeah and you get paid vacation and all like that I said well this is great and so I said thank you I like this so a couple weeks later when I'm when I'm working in an employee parking lot under an umbrella since I don't umbrella nice and warm in Phoenix 110 in the summer the time of life I can read before I let people come in the gates and all this auto auction so that lady comes in the blonde she's an employee back with how do you like your job this is good good she said well I'm the one who called Bob and told you about it okay this job for you so I said thank you I struggled a little bit even about thinking about it because most of the things I think about when I think about kindnesses I think about people who have been kind and showed kindness to me and maybe ultimately those are are the Lord showing sometimes is the Lord showing kindness but but one thing I did think of well I thought of two but the one I'm going to share is it has to do with one of the with verse 10 he has not dealt with us according to our sins nor punished us according to our iniquities I remember when I first the first time I really had and this happened back when we were Amish in Ohio and it was actually Dwayne's dad was a minister that I had that I spoke to and confessed sins that were condemning me and it was the first time that I was really really had felt free had an assurance that my sins were like like we're all forgiven and I just remember it was the next day the grass was so green in the sky was so blue and and and I just looked at the whole world differently and I just I had it I had a I don't know it was just such a such a such a wonderful fresh feeling that I just just felt like I could just taste that the goodness and the kindness of God appreciate that oh to take a turn here I I have memories of the goodness and kindness of God and sadly I couldn't see him at the moment I could only look back and see that God was good and kind some of these things that I'm in my mind I wouldn't really want to share all together but just dangerous things that I would do I guess I was given liberties to try things and do things that I don't think they were wise riding wild horses that weren't there weren't even at all saved the ride or driving the two-wheel cart with a horse that wasn't saved and getting booked off getting rolled off the things that I wanted to do them I want the experience do them and I don't think it was wise but God was kind and merciful and saved my life even saved me from getting hurt too bad and but on a like a deeper more serious level I'd say that was in my teen years I was getting to be more I was guess it was 20 years old and I had high high ideas in the springtime of being a great guy that summer and doing great things I'm ashamed to say it but just great things in the world like it was in the sports world and people were asking me to do this do that we need you need this spot field when you test by the field maybe we can win here and gain a victory there and just I was all hyped up it got so stressful by end of the summer I was playing ball games at night sometimes just and then get asking fill in on volleyball games on other places and by end of that summer I was ready to just ditch that and just told my parents about it and I kind of had a feeling of like what Norman said about things got more more clear

when I just said no I don't want to do those things anymore I'm giving up I'm gonna gonna join the church and that's just all I need to do to be right with God I just kind of game came to the breaking place of those of those wild things and I can just see even though I was confused at the moment I still see God's goodness and kindness just being poured out on me and was very unworthy of them and like to bring it full circle I guess I know now today that I can see that so clearly and I just I want that to be a continuation in my life I see examples in Scripture I want to follow just like Enoch Enoch wasn't just saved from some wild wild horses and rights and stuff or raising on back roads in the dark he was he walked with God all his life like that was that was the goodness and the kindness he experienced and that's that's what I want on a deeper full circle level of God's goodness and kindness and I know I know he's there if I do my part thanks thanks for each one of you sharing so far hopefully more will share what I'm finding is I have a lot in common with all of you so praise the Lord for that you know if you want to start at the beginning of my life I don't want to take too much time here but scientifically had I been born 10-15 years earlier I would not have lived there would not have been the technology to keep me alive so as I grew up there was times when I wasn't sure if that was a blessing if it was the kindness of God or if it would have been better if I would have been born 20 years earlier so but as life has gone on and you experience more of more of the kindness of God I can thank the Lord today for for being kind at that time in allowing me to grow up probably the first heartfelt prayer that I prayed in all earnestness was it 10 11 years old I so wanted a little brother and all the Lord was sharing with sisters finally at about the age when I really it wasn't a big deal anymore along times a little brother but it was confirmation to me that the Lord heard that and in in his time he he answers according to his will probably the greatest kindness of God in my life is you know age 19 confessing him before men receiving his salvation through Jesus I do believe that's the ultimate kindness of God toward humanity above all else is salvation through his own son and then from there to to keep the call on my life not just letting me make a mere confession but also seeking to call me into a closer walk with him I've had times of confusion my testimony would be the Lord is all always faithful I've cried out to him and in some very strange and and unmeditated circumstances and he's always been faithful it was predicted even after surviving my birth that I wouldn't live till 30 just due to the lifestyle I was living if the Lord is willing I'll celebrate my 40th birthday here a few more days so thankful for that more more current your question is when does the kindness of God seem like tangible you can taste it I'm blessed with that experience quite regularly as most of you know a lot of times I'll roll out in my line of work in my prayers I leave the driveway is Lord if it be your will you don't bring me safely back here you see it week by week on the edge of the road those who aren't going back they're not going to make it back life is life has changed for them in a matter of seconds so when I when I do pull in that driveway and the little ones come out to greet me the the kindness of God is is is as tangible as I've ever experienced it and I praise him that I get to experience that quite regularly so far and if he would be so kind I hope that he would give me more more of those days because it does it does draw me close to him it makes it makes me realize who he is and who I am I'm no better than the other person who didn't get to go home but God has been merciful and kind so far and I bless him for that I'm gonna come up here I was thinking of kindness as little things and I and I was calling I was calling the God of the God of physics I just he's in control of every little butterfly flap that affects every other little every other little thing and so on I find myself often saying that was very kind of you to him with some little thing and I couldn't really think of it any specific thing but that that's when I typically taste it like when I'm if I if I drop something and it could have gone down a hole but it landed right in the right spot and I just like just like that's very kind of you like he didn't have to do that and he just he does he does those things and he can and he does so when I was about 20 or my early 20s I worked at this big machine shop and I was working on a table saw not a table saw a band saw so there's like a table right here and then this big saw blade that's like a band a wheel up here and a wheel down

here and it's just going and I was making a key and so I had my I was holding this little piece of metal and there's like a hole that the the blade goes through and there's like speaking of being unwise and just taking chances and and I was trying to hold this little this little piece of metal on this great big saw this thing's roaring and I'm trying to like cut little not I'd like traced a little design on there and I was trying to cut little notches and if you if you can kind of understand like there wasn't much to hold on to and I was pushing on this key trying to hold it in the right spot and I can't remember exactly how it happened but it snagged the the blade snagged on the key and and pulled the key into the hole and somehow my finger went right into that hole with that blade and right at that moment the the big band blade popped off of the it came off the wheel the machine is still going but the blade is just sitting there with my finger in this hole and I was just like just like and like okay got my finger out of the hole just like okay I shouldn't have been doing that I could have lost my finger I've been like really seriously injured and then the punch line is the the guy that normally worked to that saw or the guy that was very familiar with that saw I told him what happened and he was like that blade never pops off the wheels anyway I got little hairs on my my finger not as many as Leroy but but but God knows about all of them you know and yeah I just make it sure but I was pretty sure anyway that yeah that was just one time yeah yeah there's so many things that could be said I guess about everybody that shares I'm like yeah that brings up other ideas and it's yeah first first thing that always goes through my mind like Walter said is the everyday things like last night I lay down I closed my eyes and I was as dead except I was breathing but I didn't know anything this morning I woke up again behold the kindness of God anyway I kind of decided I'd I'd share my beginnings as well and then Norman just basically said what I was gonna say so so I've got that experience to except I I was convinced the the people that I was fellowshiping with at the time they they kicked me out because of my sins so maybe maybe it was even more intense I don't know the other thing so maybe was before I met my wife and I for four months and I've shared this before in more detail some of you will remember but anyway for a month I was praying intensely about you know entering a relationship or what the Lord would have me do as far as moving forward in my life in that aspect and he how he plainly or or very plainly it seemed very plain to me showed me a way or the way and and how things worked out just the kindness of the Lord I praise him for it thank you and you think you've got the best wife in the world right yeah I'll just something that came to mind just some small things like that kind of stood out to me I guess was like when I was flying to Germany I guess on the way over the one flight got delayed and my layover which was supposed to be like an hour long I had to like rush along and was able to get aboard and continue the flight and another time I guess was when I went to Bangladesh the one flight I was on it was delayed they had some issues I guess with the aircraft and some repairs to make and I think it was like six hours extra or something like that and then the flight that Daniel had booked for me the domestic flight in Bangladesh well actually guess it probably a different one but it was supposed to leave like an hour half earlier earlier than what when I got there but I was able to get aboard it and get down into Cox's Bazaar a little earlier instead of late at night so that was a real blessing appreciate that yeah I yeah I I knew there could be you know we we could spend a lot of time talking about the kindnesses of God we've experienced in our life I just thought it'd be nice to share a few of these and and I I'm blessed by them we could probably have all the sisters and all the children express something yet and talk about his kindness for days and nights and but you don't want to do that now but I do just want to I do just want us to remember the kindness of God and there's there's more than one reason that we should remember the kindness of God for one I think God wants us to remember his kindness he wants us to acknowledge his kindness he wants us to bless him the way David blesses him in his psalms but I also think he wants that kindness to be a part of us kindness of God is powerful it's convicting many of these things that we're talking about were things that were steps that made us grow and and become more devoted more disciplined more right something that at the time of that which one of

us after we really tasted this kind of kindness would have been ready to turn around and do some simple act no we we wouldn't have done that like it would have been so offensive to the man the father the God the man in authority that I don't want to say the man but that the God in authority who was so kind to us oh we think of kindness as nice being nice and being pleasant and it is it's not it is nice and ultimately finally it is pleasant but the kindness of God sometimes hurts sometimes it's like a kind surgeon who digs his knife deep into our flesh to dig out some infection Jesus said about peace he said not as the world give I peace and and I think it's similar to kindness that the world will talk about kindness the world will talk about being kind but I think I think we need to realize that though though there are some ways in which it overlaps the kindness that Jesus wants that God wants for us will look different in in many cases it'll look different most people in the world are kind to the people who are kind to them right there are some people who are just just so nasty and rude you just like to be rude to everybody but but most people most people including heathens and sinners are kind to the people that are kind to them but true kindness is giving ourselves to others who don't deserve it who can't give it back and who won't thank us for it that's a kindness that is godlike in Titus 3 it says for we also once were foolish ourselves disobedient deceived enslaved to various lusts and pleasures spending our life in malice and envy hateful hating one another but when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared 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 of the Holy Spirit whom he poured upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior this is where true kindness is found is when is when it's it's when the strong person is patient and kind to the weak person it's when it's when the powerful are patient and kind to the oppressed when those in authority are patient and kind to those under their authority when the healthy are patient and kind to the sick when the intelligent are patient and kind to the idiot and when the ones who are in the right are patient and kind to the ones who are in the wrong like some father to his child we've probably all seen something like this they're ten times smarter than their child there are ten times stronger than their child and their child is wanting to do something foolish, something that's not, that's just not the good thing to do, and the Father patiently and kindly instructs, guides, directs, disciplines, warns in patience and kindness. Though he would have the strength and the knowledge to just ridicule him or hurt him or do whatever, he does this with patience and kindness. That's God-like kindness.

Think about the greatness of God. He created all things visible and invisible. By him all things are held together.

He looks at the earth and it trembles. He touches the hills and they smoke. He rides on the wings of the wind, heaven is his throne, the earth is his footstool.

He holds the water, all the waters in heaven and earth he can hold in the hollow of his hand. He can measure out the heavens in a span. A span, the distance from this thumb to this finger, that's a span.

So before the days of tape measures, they would measure something, this pulpit is one, two, three, maybe three and a half spans, three spans in a hand's breath. Three spans for this. Well, for God, the whole sky from one horizon to the other is just merely one span.

He made us out of dust. He gave us a breath of life, and in the blink of an eye, he can and will take that breath away from us, and we will return to dust again. And in this span of time, we have rebelled against him, we have sinned, we have been foolish, we have been unkind, we have been proud, we have made bad choices, and we have become enslaved.

And yet this great and powerful God gives his own son to become such a lowly creature as us, to suffer and die, that we might be freed. What unspeakable loving kindness. If we have tasted of this kindness, we ourselves ought to be kind.

We should taste like that to others. The very smell and the very taste of God should be evident in us. When someone has an interaction with us, they ought to taste that, they ought to be able to smell that.

You know, I keep bees, and bees are identified by their smell. All the worker bees have a smell that identifies them as belonging to this certain hive. And when a hive of bees at their entrance, they always have guard bees there.

And that's how these guard bees know whether a bee trying to enter is welcome or not welcome, is if he has the right smell. And if he doesn't smell like the bees in the hive, he's rejected. And how do you think these bees get their smell? They get it from the queen.

Each queen has its own individual pheromone that it puts out, its own little perfume distinct from all other queens. And the worker bees on a regular basis go and rub themselves on the queen and take a little bit of that scent to themselves. And they all have a little bit of the queen's scent.

It tells where the bees belong. And I think that's how we ought to be. We ought to smell and taste like Christ by being in regular contact with his kindness.

People should say we can, people should interact with us and be like, we can tell where you belong. We can tell whether you belong in the kingdom of this world or in the kingdom of God. That's what happened when Peter and John there in Acts, after they gave this little speech, it says the people saw that they were uneducated and unlearned men.

And it says they perceived that these men had been with Jesus. What good is it if we can outdo the unbeliever in our knowledge, in our understanding, in our cleverness, in our debates, and in spiritual gifts, if they can undo us, outdo us in kindness? Sure, we have the truth and sure the truth is important and sure we believe the truth and we won't back off of it. And we won't trade the truth for a lie.

It is important. But if we have that truth and it's void of kindness, it does not smell like Christ. Romans 2.4 says, or do you think lightly of the riches of his kindness and tolerance and patience and knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? The kindness of God leads you to repentance.

I read this testimony recently of a woman who was a lesbian and she had a poor opinion of Christians and she published an article in the local paper with a critique of a local Christian group and she received an enormous amount of responses from all kinds of people for the article she published. And she put two empty boxes on her desk, one in one corner and one in the other corner, and she put all the hate mail in one box and she put all the fan mail in the other box, she considered people who are fans in one box, hate mail in the other box. But she received this one letter, a two-page letter.

It was kind and inquiring. It had some warmth and civility and yet it had probing questions and she couldn't figure out which box to put it in. And so it laid on her desk for seven days because she could not figure out, should this go into the to the people who are against me or the people that are for me? The story goes, she said it was the kindest letter of opposition she'd ever received.

The story goes that she ended up contacting the person and it led her to repentance of homosexuality. That's what we should strive for. The prophet Hosea said, I drew them with gentle cords with bands of love and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck.

I stooped and fed them. In Romans 2, Paul says, behold the kindness and severity of God. God's unspeakable kindness makes his severity more severe.

And his unspeakable severity makes his kindness more kind. God is love. Love is patient.

Patience is kind and therefore God is kind. I'm persuaded that at the end to the lost soul, the most dreadful torture is the thought of having rejected such perfect love. Like worse than the flames of hellfire is the absence of God.

Worse than being infested with non-dying worms is the utter absence of all goodness and all kindness. Worse than teeth-chattering darkness is the complete absence of any hope. When someone is knowingly bent on evil, a calm, loving, but true response is convicting, consuming, and a torture to his guilty soul, the kind that can produce a repentance not to be repented of.

There's a quote I copied out of Uncle Tom's Cabin the last time I read it, be a quote from Harriet Beecher Stowe. It's toward the end of the book there where it's talking about what was happening there with that slave owner named Legree, who was just this awfully wicked, cruel man. It's despicable how he used his slaves.

And he managed to take any slave that had some decency about him and just turn him into vile, wicked wretches just by his cruelty and his mercilessness. But he bought Uncle Tom and he couldn't break him. Uncle Tom just kept right on being kind.

Uncle Tom, he would go to the slaves that at the end of the day didn't have their quota filled for the amount of cotton needed to pick and he would take out of his bag and put it in theirs. And he'd take the beating if his quota wasn't met. And this Legree with his main slaves, Sambo and Quimbo, they tried utterly to break Uncle Tom, to get him to join into their cruelty with each other, and they couldn't break him.

And it nearly drove Legree insane. He could just hardly bear that someone's kindness could outdo his cruelty. Anyway, this is what Harriet Beecher Stowe says, you have wonder to hear in the same evangel that God is love and God is a consuming fire.

See you not how to the soul resolved in sin, perfect love is the most fearful torture, the soul and sentence of direst despair. I'm just going to close with 1 Peter, which is the passage that had originally got me to think about talking about the kindness of God. 1 Peter 2, the first three verses, it says, therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and all hypocrisy and envy, and all slander, like newborn babies long for, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word so that by it, you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

I'm going to read that backwards. If, verse by verse it would be, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord, long for the pure milk of the word so that you may grow in respect of salvation, and put away malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. I'll leave it at that and I'll open it up if somebody wants to share any more thoughts, comments.

I thought of one more testimony that kind of relates to some of the end things that you shared there about the goodness and the severity of God. One time before I was married, I was traveling across the country on my bicycle. Maybe I've shared this with other people, so bear with me if you've heard it.

I was traveling across the country on my bicycle, and in my mind, I was arguing with this brother from months prior, this argument that we had, and I was still arguing in my mind with him. I'm out in the middle of nowhere, and I rode off the side of the road because I was so preoccupied in my mind with this division that I rode off the path, off the side of the road, into the ditch, flipped over, and I knocked all the wind out of me. I just sat there, and I immediately got up, and I said, I'm sorry, Lord.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please forgive me.

Please forgive me. I'm sorry. I was just like, please, Lord, please forgive me.

Please, I'm sorry, because I knew why I was being judged severely. It was because of malice and envy and strife, and these things were in my heart, but it was the goodness of the Lord that judged me, and then it was the goodness of the Lord that immediately somebody actually had just been drawn. It's like one of these backcountry roads.

You can just be out there, and there's nobody passing you. Every once in a while, you pass somebody, and it just so happens that when I drove off into the ditch, this man passed me, and he saw, and he stopped immediately, and it's like this thing happened so fast. I'm off the side of the road.

I know what's going on. I'm begging for mercy, and then shortly after, I'm in his car. He takes me to the nearest bike store.

I get a new tire, all within like 45 minutes to an hour and a half, and my bike's all fixed. I'm ready to go, and I'm like, I'm just going to go to the woods and find a place to camp and just pray and humble myself, but I just thought about it. It was the goodness of the Lord, but it also tied into some of the things you shared at the end, so I wanted to share that.

God bless you. That was out of line. Thank you.

I saw the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. The angel of the Lord encampeth from the fountain that feareth him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, low to anger and plenteous in mercy. The Lord is merciful and gracious, low to anger and plenteous in mercy. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquity.

Make not your strains for hail, but your brethren know. Some are tried with fires of testing, some are tried through floods of woe. Jesus knows our strength and weakness, understands we are but frail, girds us up and will forgive us if we falter, if we fail.

Take heart then, my weary brother, though you suffer shame and loss, in your present mind affliction God is cleansing you from dross. Verit brother, faint my sister, see the church that's gone before. Though the cross destroy the body, yet the soul he will restore.

Hear the witnesses that cheer us as we tread the road with joy. Can we truly say, come what may, for Thine is the kingdom, our God.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/XQdaSG1fb6M.mp4>  
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