

# How to Make This the Best Summer

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon encourages believers to embody the love of Jesus through patience, kindness, and forgiveness this summer.*

**Duration:** 15:27

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 13:1

**Topics:** "Summer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of love according to the Bible. He highlights that even if one possesses great knowledge, faith, or spiritual gifts, without love, these things hold no value before God. The preacher encourages the congregation to be kind and patient, as love is characterized by these qualities. He also emphasizes that love does not keep a record of wrongs and that God's love is shown through the sacrifice of His son. The sermon concludes with the reminder that love is the most excellent way and that it is through love that people can be drawn to God.

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## Transcript

How many of you want to have the best summer you've ever had? Okay, so now listen. The best summer you can have is the summer where we're more like Jesus than any other summer before. Does that follow? To be more like Jesus means you're going to be happier, more peace, more tranquility, when you and I draw near and we act more like Jesus.

How can we act that way? Only through the power of the Holy Spirit. You can't try to psych yourself into, I'm going to be more like Jesus. It doesn't work that way.

So here's what I want to leave you with. The Bible tells us in the New Testament that God is love, and 1st Corinthians tells us that even if you memorize verses, or have faith to move mountains, or if you understand all mysteries, you have the ability to speak in other languages because the Spirit is helping you, and you even are ready to give your body to be burned as a sacrifice for God. The Bible says that love is so important that without love all those other things have no value.

That I could preach a sermon that could bless people, but when I step off the pulpit, if I'm not walking in love, it loses its value before God. Otherwise I'm a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbala. Cymbal, not cymbala, right.

All right, all right. And then the Bible goes on. Once it establishes that fact, Paul says, and we're going to continue next Tuesday.

Bring your kids, leave them off because next Tuesday we're going to continue what I started last Tuesday, which is a study of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Christian church is supposed to be built by supernatural means. Average people like you and me, used by God with a spiritual gift that He imparts that has nothing to do with your education, nothing to do with your talent, nothing to do with your IQ, nothing to do with your finances, high school dropout or PhD, it doesn't matter.

The Spirit works through God's people through these gifts, which we'll talk about. But in between this discussion of gifts, Paul says, but remember this, the most excellent way is not the gifts, it's not the power and the glory, it's love. Love.

How many want to be more loving this summer than ever before? Because we're the only billboard that most people are going to see. The best way to draw people to the Lord is to love them. Why? Because people are looking for love.

They're looking for God, but God is love. So you could say it this way, people are secretly looking for God, although they don't know it because they're looking for someone to love them. So Paul says, the greatest of everything you can have in your life is love.

You could be a Greek scholar and teach at a Bible seminary, but if you don't have love, zip. You could be a pastor of a megachurch, zip. You could write books that win awards, without love, zip.

You could have the ability to pray and lift people up to heaven, but without love, zip, zero, nothing. And here are the three things today that struck me or this last couple days about love that I want from my life this summer. Number one, the first thing Paul says when he describes this love is he says, when God's love is in you and working in you, it makes you patient.

Love is patient. You know that, right? You see a dad or a mom who loves their child and their child messes up or is, you know, young and all that. The mother is patient.

The father's patient. Doesn't act out, doesn't react quick, patient, waiting. Brothers and sisters, let's do real talk.

Why are all of us here tonight? Because we've been good or because God has been patient with us? Come on, lift your hand if you know God's been patient. So here's the thing, God's been so patient with me, I can't tell you, I can't express to you how patient God has been with me. I can't tell you the depth of it.

How could I be impatient with other people when God, who's perfect, has been patient with me? He's perfect and he's patient. I'm imperfect. How could I blow up on somebody and get impatient and give up on them? Some of us here maybe have a personality that your weak spot is you go off and you're impatient with people waiting on a line, someone failing to do what you need, what you ask them to do.

But remember, love is patient. Say that with me, class. Love is patient.

Secondly, love is kind. This summer, we gotta be kinder than we were last summer. Because has God not been kind to you and I? Come on, do we not have so many examples of God's kindness? What is kindness? Kindness, someone has said, is love in action.

When you're kind to someone, you're showing them the love that you have from. You're not just saying love, you're doing love. You're showing kindness.

Now, God's been so kind to us, we can woo people to the Lord by just being kind to them. Instead of being impatient, instead of being unkind. What's the opposite of patient? Impatient.

What's the opposite of kind? Unkind. Let's ask God, no unkind words this summer. All in favor, say, I. Now, it's got to be done by the Spirit, but we don't want to say unkind things, unkind deeds, unkind thoughts.

We don't want to have that this summer. Starting today, come on, the Bible says, I mean, someone has said that the Bible teaches that the perseverance of the saints, and the way we persevere and keep serving Jesus until he comes again, it's made up of 10,000 new beginnings. And we're making a new beginning for ourselves tonight.

God, forgive me for my impatience. Make me patient. Forgive me for unkind remarks, unkindness.

And it's easy to be unkind to people who are unkind, but we have to show kindness even when people are unkind. A new believer in our church told me that he was riding his bike in the city, and he was in the bike lane, and there were a couple people in the bike lane, two kind of guys talking, and they could have stood on the curb. They could have stood on the sidewalk.

There were no cars parked there. They could have stood there. No, they were talking right in the bike lane, and here they come chugging along.

Here he comes, and he stops because they're there, but he has to stay in the bike lane. And they turn, and they go, hey, what's wrong with you? Didn't you see us? And he's in the bike lane, and he told me, you know what, Pastor? When I think of how I used to be before God began to work in my life, I was thinking of all the words I used to be able to say to them, and I would have been ashamed. I would have been so ashamed, but he said, I just looked at them, smiled, and went right around and left to be kind.

I heard another one that will make you laugh. I just heard it on Sunday. There was a woman visiting here who my wife and I have known for a long time, and she's Puerto Rican, but she does not look Hispanic at all.

So she told me she was in California, told me how God's been dealing with her, and she's a chunky woman, and back then she was even heavier. I'm using the word she used about herself. I'm not saying it in an unkind way.

So she said she went into a Burger King. She wanted to get some food, so there were two Hispanic women waiting on the thing, and when she walked in, they did not know that she spoke Spanish, so they start speaking in Spanish to each other, and one says to the other one, look at this fat thing. She's ordering two sandwiches, and she probably will eat them before she even gets to the parking lot in Spanish, and she doesn't know.

They don't know. She's understanding every word, and she used to have a real violent temper, so she's just listening, and they're talking back and forth about her in Spanish, and she's understanding every word and calling her, what would that be? Gorgita, just a little fat thing and talking horrible about her, right? So then she has to continue the order, and they say to each other, watch. She won't order diet.

She's going to get the regular soda and a big one because she's a typical American, overweight, out of shape, makes me sick. They're saying this in Spanish, and she's understanding every word. Now, that's a test from the Lord.

Am I right, ladies and gentlemen? I said, what happened? She said, God just kept me peaceful, kind. I said, that's good. That's amazing.

She said, she ordered her drink, and she had to pay with a debit card. She paid with a debit card. They gave her the receipt, and then she leaned over, and in perfect Spanish said, thank you very much for waiting on me, in Spanish, and may God richly bless you today.

And they were like, they could have lost their jobs. So when people are unkind, what do we want to do? Be kind. That's not for 12-year-olds or 6-years-old.

That's for all of us. Love is patient. Say it.

Love is kind. Just one other one. Listen.

Love keeps no record of wrongs. Now, why are we here tonight? Because God is patient, and God is kind. He's so kind, He gave His Son.

Now it says one of the ways love shows itself, when God's love is in you, is you don't have a little black book with people's names in it who have done you wrong. Oh, yeah. I remember that one.

Back when I was in Kingston, Jamaica, I remember what happened back then. You know what love does? It keeps no record of wrong. That's supernatural.

Because all of us remember when people hurt us. Am I right? But what if God did that to you? Oh, look how quiet it got. What if God said, oh, you're going to keep a record of what people did to you? Okay, good.

I'll keep a record of what you've done against me. Where would we be today? How many are happy God has not only forgiven He's forgotten every sin we've ever committed? Come on, let's put our hands together loud. Forgiven, forgotten, as far as the East is from the West.

Now, just like there are certain people who have a propensity, or a leaning, or a tendency toward impatience, other people have a tendency, quick, to say an unkind thing, do an unkind thing. There are other people who are patient, kind, but they can't let it go. When people have hurt them, they keep a record of it.

And you know what that does? Do you think it gets back at the person who hurt you? No, you hurt yourself. So now they've hurt you twice. They did something bad to you, and now by you keeping it, they're hurting you twice.

Because it's jamming up your spirit. And it's not letting the love of God flow through you, and it's the blessing of God. So love keeps no record of wrong.

How would we come to church if it wasn't for God's forgetting our sins through the blood of Jesus Christ? Who would like to have your life put on the screen here tonight? Anybody here? Come on, every little moment, every little sentence, every little deed. No, God's not only forgiven, he's forgotten. And that love

of God says, I'm going to let it go, and I'll be able to bless those who have been mean to me.

But pastor, I can't do that. I know you can't, neither can I. But I've had to come to God and say, God, you know what this person has done or said. So God, give me the willingness to let it go and erase the thing from my life.

I don't want to have this resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness. Let's just pray. If you're here today and you're struggling with letting it go, keeping no record of something really nasty someone said or did against you.

And listen, that's a battle we all have. Every pastor in this church has had that battle. No one's been condescending to you.

We all battle with that. If you're here today and say, pastor, on this Tuesday night, I want to face this summer with a clean slate. I want to give those people to God who have hurt me.

And then the memory of them, just the thought of them, sometimes riles me up or it wounds me again. Just stand up where you are. Go ahead.

I know that's hard, but God will help you. Just stand up where you are. God, we forgive those people in Jesus' name.

We ask you to help us to keep no record of wrongs. We ask you to give us grace to let it go so we can be free. Because when we hold on to it, we don't put them in a prison.

We're in the prison. We ask you to break the chains of resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, so that we can love people, even those who have been so nasty to us. We can let it go.

And we follow your example. When on the cross, you didn't say, Father, destroy the people who are putting the nails in my hands. Oh, I'll never forget what they've done.

No, you said, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing. We pray for kindness, patience, and no record of wrongs in our hearts and spirits for this summer.

We pray it in Jesus' name. And everyone said, Amen. You may be seated.

Let's clap our hands for the Word of God. Come on. Love is patient.

Love is kind. Love keeps no record of wrongs.

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