

Part 6 - Who is God?

A Study of His Attributes – Kindness

Do you know Him?

 **Psalm 46:10**

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

The Messages so Far

- God is a Radically God-Centred God (God loves Himself)
- God is fully complete within himself
- God's Glory is His Supreme Passion
- God's Glory is Our Supreme Satisfaction
- God's Goodness is revealed in His Holiness, Justice & Wrath

We learnt that last time we discussed things – and it's **not always apparent that God is good**, because of His wrath ... but as we saw, once you connect the dots of the very character and nature of God – it makes logical sense (you may not like the implications it presents – but that's not really God's problem – that's more our problem!):

- God is Holy
- A Holy God will not tolerate sin (He will not accommodate your sin or mine)
- Sin must be punished (or paid for in some way)
- The punishment warrants His wrath
- This makes Him a good and righteous judge

So these attributes of God when you pull them together in a cohesive and logical way, make perfect sense (we can see this in our everyday lives too).

When we study God and consider who He is, we must bring all the attributes of God together:

- Together - they define who God is and what He is like.
- Apart - they present a distorted image of God and we soon fall into errors

God's Kindness

I wanted to spend some time talking about this attribute of God. I was talking to a brother recently who has been a Christian for a while, and when I started to discuss the kindness of God, he admitted that he did not see God much that way.

And you have to wonder, 'why?'

Attributes & Our Experiences

We can tend to lean toward the attributes of God that more align with our experiences – from our dealings with our parents, our friends, our pastors – with authority figures in particular. And these experiences can act like lenses through which we view God.

So we amplify those attributes that we are more **aligned in our thinking** towards.

Perhaps it's God's:

- Justice - black & white, reward & punishment, action & consequence
- Grace - you love the grace, its all about Amazing Grace
- Love - you love hugs, never a confrontation
- Wrath - it's all about punishment, suffering, the hard road, pain

Since we understand that Jesus died for our sins – the punishment due us was place upon Him – we can sometimes forget about one of the motivating attributes of God that was behind the cross – God's loving-kindness.

The Kindness of God

The nature of God is to be kind – and in fact to show loving-kindness.

 **Jeremiah 9:24 (NIV)**

... but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises **kindness**, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

Why does God exercise kindness? Because it is His nature to be kind. He is a kind God.

Important to understand that when we say that God's very nature is kind –

- it means that God is wholly kind
- means that in Him is no unkindness
- he is not kind one moment, then unkind the next

This is important to understand – that we are talking about the attributes of God which fully define his very nature.

He will never contradict his nature by expressing something else about himself which is contrary to that nature.

- If we say that God is **truthful** – He will **never lie** to contradict this reality.
- If we say that God is **faithful** – He will **never be unfaithful** and contradict the reality who he is.

God always supports His nature – it is what defines Him, and who He is.

God is Full of Loving-Kindness

It's a beautiful picture we see of the relationship that the psalmist had with God – he saw clearly the kindness of God.

 **Psalm 36:7 (KV2)**

*How excellent is your **loving-kindness**, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of your wings.*

Kindness Understood

There is a **power** and a **beauty** that exists in the **everyday expression of kindness** – and we can miss it, and fail to understand or see it at times.

It's the power of God's kindness that draws us to Him.

 **Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV)**

*The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing **kindness**."*

He draws His people to himself with what? Kindness. And don't miss it – it's unfailing kindness. It's the type of kindness that never fails – it never stops – it goes on and on and on.

It is **God's beating heart for His creation** – it's a heart that beats full with loving-kindness.

And, God gifts this kindness to us.

 **Isaiah 54:10 (NIV)**

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my **kindness** shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, says the LORD that has mercy on you.

Random Acts of Kindness

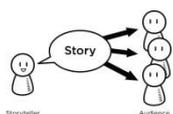
Some people are starting to get it – that there is a power built into kindness.

We as reflectors of Christ – are called to show kindness in big and small ways.

We should be the **kindest** people on earth.

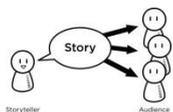
 **Galatians 5:22 (NIV)**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness,

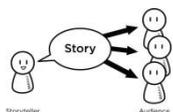


Story about paying for an older lady's groceries in Wollies. I had my daughter with me who watched on – and learnt about kindness through watching me.

If you're willing, there are opportunities to show kindness everywhere ...



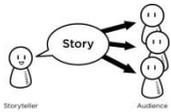
Changing a guy's tyre over outside the church – perfect!



Theo's dog – receiving prayer!

It does not matter who shows Kindness – its beauty and power are evident everywhere that it is expressed.

And it speaks of the beauty of God – His kingdom comes when **kindness breaks out!**



Suspended Coffee.

Started by a young man who just wanted to show kindness to other people. 2000 Cafes take part. Over 1.5M people impacted. 300,000 followers on Social Media.

Even in a game of basketball – check this out.



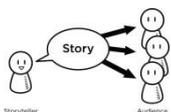
Outstanding story of Kindness and Unconditional Friendship

Kindness truly is beautiful.

Power of Kindness – Inspires Others!

When **you** show kindness to another it inspires more acts of kindness – people watching on want to get in on the act and be kind as well!

When stories of kindness are shared with people, then it also does the same thing – it inspires people to do more kind acts.



John Sweeny tells the story about his interaction with a homeless woman – buying her some food. His son’s best friend Isaac heard the story and he wanted to be kind too. So he used all his pocket money to buy Christmas gifts for a homeless woman’s 3 children – it was the same woman. The story went global on TV.

This is what’s called “**The Elevation Principle**”. More on that in another message!

Kindness truly is truly beautiful.

So showing kindness can even affect us **physically!**

Research shows that people who express kindness enjoy a type of vaccination against some of the pathologies of life:

Kind people have:

- Fewer colds & flus
- Suffer less depression
- Suffer less migraines
- Have lower blood pressure
- Suffer reduces rates of heart disease
- Enjoy longer lives

It also has a type of immunising affect against negativity – when you are infected with a desire to be kind to people, then it's more difficult to hate your enemies.

Jesus showed us this reality

 **Matthew 5:44-45 (NIV)**

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

In short – God asks us to show kindness to our enemies, because He does so!

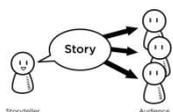
Kindness misunderstood

If we understand the long reaching benefits of God's kindness it helps us understand how He is in fact kind when it may not look that way at first glance.

One of the main keys about Kindness

God shows us Kindness everyday. How does he do that? He does it in many ways –

- his patience
- his tenderness
- his care over our welfare
- his protection over our lives
- he knows when a sparrow falls; he knows the hairs on your head
- closing doors and opening doors in our lives



Bunnings and Andy

But one aspect is sometimes misunderstood - He reveals the very thing that separates us from Him – our sin! And it is His kindness that is behind this gift to us.

 **Romans 2:4 (NIV)**

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's **kindness** is intended to lead you to repentance?

What's Our Response?

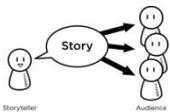
We should be **recklessly surrendered to the kindness of God** – once understood, how could we not? We should be consumed by the beauty, power and grace of God's kindness.

We should be filled with:

- Awe
- Wonder
- Appreciation
- Gratitude
- Humility
- Thanksgiving

And we should be ready to share it with others – through everyday acts of kindness.

- Gift someone with your time and a listening ear
- Leave an encouraging note for your waitress at your next café
- Help someone cross the road
- Buy someone a stranger a coffee
- Give away money – strengthen and support others



Compassion Child & Samaritans Purse

And God's greatest and most profound act of kindest toward us was to send His son to earth, that through His death on a cross, we could receive the gift of eternal life.

 **Titus 3:3-7 (NIV)**

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating

*one another. But when the **kindness** and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

Let's Pray.