

SERMON GUIDE

Acts of Grace: Embodying Christian Kindness in Everyday Life

Sermon 3: Overcoming Barriers to Kindness

Scripture: Romans 12:14-21, Matthew 5:43-48

Introduction

Have you ever seen someone juggle glass bottles? It's entertaining—until one slips and everything shatters. Life can feel like that when kindness meets resistance. Today, we're not talking about kindness when it's easy. We're talking about kindness when things fall apart—when it's inconvenient, painful, or even undeserved.

This week's message: Overcoming Barriers to Kindness

Main Idea: Kindness requires grace, especially when emotions, history, or hurt stand in the way.

Sticky Statement #1: Kindness is not weakness—it's spiritual strength under pressure.

Scripture Reading:

Romans 12:14-21

Matthew 5:43-48

Key Point 1: Barrier #1 – Prejudice

Prejudice is not just about race—it's about pre-judging others without knowing their story.

Biblical Example: Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4)

Jesus crosses cultural, historical, and religious lines to extend dignity and grace.

Sticky Statement #2: You can't extend grace to someone you've already written off.

Reflection Notes:

What assumptions do I make about others before knowing them?



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Who are the people I tend to avoid or judge?

Key Point 2: Barrier #2 – Anger

Anger often masks deeper pain. It can feel justified, but it can also become a barrier to grace.

Biblical Example: David and Saul

David refuses to retaliate, choosing God's way over revenge.

Sticky Statement #3: When you hold on to anger, you're handing over control.

Reflection Notes:

Who am I angry with, and what is the root of that anger?

What would it look like to release that anger to God?

Key Point 3: Barrier #3 – Rivalry and Competition

The need to 'one-up' others can block kindness and breed resentment.

Biblical Example: Joseph and his brothers

Joseph chooses forgiveness and blessing over retaliation, seeing God's greater plan.



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Sticky Statement #4: The grace you show today could unlock the destiny God has for you tomorrow.

Reflection Notes:

Where in my life do I feel the need to compete or compare?

How can I shift from competition to compassion?

Shifting the Perspective

Jesus gives us two clear commands:

- Love your enemies
- Pray for those who persecute you

You cannot hate someone you are sincerely praying for. Prayer softens your heart and shifts your spirit.

Reflection Notes:

Who do I need to start praying for today?



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What boundaries do I need to set while still showing kindness?

Discussion Questions

1. How do you overcome betrayal?

2. How do you forgive negligence that caused a tragedy?

3. How do you show kindness when confronted with evil?

Challenge

Identify the barriers in your life—grudges, biases, wounds. Name them. Then ask God for the grace to respond with kindness instead of retaliation.

Final Sticky Statement: When we respond with grace instead of retaliation, we preach a sermon this world can't ignore.



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Reflection Notes:

What barriers am I confronting this week?

How can I be a vessel of kindness in my home, workplace, and community?

Closing Thought:

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.' May we live that truth. Let our kindness break down barriers, disrupt hate, and make room for reconciliation, healing, and hope.