

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW | KINDNESS

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Traders Point, welcome. How are we doing? Hey, so good to be with you everyone at the campuses, everyone watching online. Welcome. Glad you are spending part of your weekend with us.

We are continuing in our series *What the World Needs Now*. What does the world need? Any takers? Let's go to the other side. Anybody like, "I think we're good. It looks pretty good out there. I'm completely satisfied," or "I'm moderately satisfied." Anybody? No, right? The world needs a lot and so does the church.

So what we've been doing in this series is saying what the world needs now is for God to indwell His people, for His Spirit to produce some things in our lives so that we can become what the world needs. This is not a series of us pointing fingers out to the world saying, "You know what you need? Let me tell you." Everyone loves that person.

This is not us sitting on our hands and waiting patiently for Jesus to come back, with our eyes closed and oblivious of what's going on around us. This is us with our hands open, hands out, surrendered, praying to God saying, "God, fill us with Your Spirit. Allow us to become what this world needs." That's what this series is all about.

And to be that to help become what this world needs, to be that kind of a church, we said we can't do that on our own. That only happens by the power of the Holy Spirit, by the power of God's Spirit. And there's a phrase that really looks at what that means, and it's called the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit. This is in Galatians, chapter 5. When God's Spirit comes, His character begins to show, His divine character shows up in our lives with something that we can never produce on our own. This perfect fruit. And we get a list of this right here in Galatians 5. Take a look. It says:

"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

I mean, do you think the world could use some of this? A little bit of this would go a long way. That's what we've been saying in this series.

And one thing to clarify, we see here that the word is *fruit* not *fruits*. That's a good way to look at this. It's not to look at it and say, "I think I've got three of these. And you have one and you have one. We'll assemble together and become like the Christian Avengers," right? No, it's better seen as one fruit, one piece, because God is perfectly all of these things. And love, perfect love is both patient and kind, right?

In Galatians it kind of tees this idea up. It's to show that these aren't all separate, they are actually interdependent. It's this one piece of fruit. And what we've been doing in this series is just kind of taking word by word each week and saying, "Okay. What does this side of the fruit look like?" And this week we're going to be looking *kindness*. Kindness.

And before we kind of drill in on what Biblical kindness is, what does God mean when He says that He's going to produce this kind of kindness in our lives, I do want to make a distinction between something—between kindness and niceness.

You see, the cheap substitute of kindness that we settle for is niceness, right? Sometimes we use these words interchangeably, but even when we use them, I think we're setting the bar really low when we say, "Be nice." You can be nice. You can be pleasant. You can be kind of easygoing. You can be nice and not be kind.

I'm on to this Southern charm that so many of you guys have. I've realized that you can just say things in a high-pitched voice really quickly that sounds good, but it's really kind of a backhanded compliment. It sounds nice, but it's not kind. Like, "Hey, oh my goodness. Come here. Let me get my arms around you. Boy, you've got a face only a mother could love. Come here." Like, "Thanks, Grandma. I think."

Do you know what I mean? Be nice is not the same as being kind. Be nice, that's what your spouse says as you're getting out of the car about to meet with some people and let's just say that you don't exactly get along with them. So you get out of the car, and she says, "Hey, look at me. Look at me. Be nice." She's not saying be kind. She's saying, "Don't embarrass me. Don't make this a situation. Go in there and be nice."

Be nice is the sentiment that we teach kids as they are growing up because they have this unbelievable combination of curiosity and no filter, right? So we say this, "Hey, if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all." And it still doesn't help when we say it, right? Because kids will be in the middle of a packed place and look at someone dead in her face and be like, "Why is she that big?" "Dad, Dad, why does he smell like that? Why does he smell so bad?" And I'm like, "Oh my gosh." So we say things like, "If you don't have anything nice to say, you don't say anything at all."

Which is great for kids, but I think, as we mature, we can mature into the fullness of the word *kindness*. And kindness is more than pleasantries. Kindness really—it's this big idea that I'm going to put the needs of someone else, the person in front of me, before my own.

When we see kindness in Scripture it has this wide breadth of all of the different things it could mean and how it shows up. It's more than just niceness. For example, in Proverbs 12 we see:

"Worry weighs down a person down, an encouraging word cheers a person up." Proverbs 12:25 (NLT)

So there is that side of kindness, "I'm going to encourage you. I'm going to lift you up." But there is a whole other side of kindness. Look at this.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Proverbs 27:6 (ESV)

So there is this kind of kindness where even if it doesn't feel like it is something nice to say, it's something that is needed to be said. And if it's going to make them better then I'm willing to say it out of kindness.

In the Bible kindness is used over and over and over again translated in different ways. So what I want to do is just try to get a snapshot here, just some big ideas of when we see kindness and we see what God is trying to produce in our lives.

Here's some of it:

It's the ability to have compassion for all people.

That's kind of like the base level of it. To look out to the world and to be kind, you have compassion for them. You have to see their needs and want to put them before yourself.

It's the ability to remain tender, even when you are met with harshness.

Right? That's a very difficult thing to do. Most of us at 8 a.m. on Monday, we start out kind. By Friday afternoon, there is a harshness that has set in. There's this level of supernatural kindness that God wants to put in us. When we remain tender, we don't become hardened to the world.

And then this last one:

It's the ability to do what's best for the other person even when you don't have to and when they don't deserve it.

Some of us right now are kind with a supervisor, and it's not because we believe we should be, or we want to be. We're kind to them because we like getting a paycheck every couple of weeks. We're kind because we'd like to get a bigger paycheck. So we kind of use kindness in this way. But this idea is, "No, no. I am going to do it even when I don't have to, even when it's not reciprocated.

You know, there's a kindness that comes in marriage. And I don't know a lot of the details about your marriage, but I'll say this and maybe you might think I have some cameras set up in your house. But I can almost guarantee you that there are a lot of husbands who get really kind about 9 or 9:15.

Maybe it's a coincidence. Have you ever noticed this? It's like, "Hey, babe. I'm going downstairs. Do you need anything? Glass of water, omelet, glass of wine? Anything you need right now at this moment so that I could serve you?" And they're either being kind because that's just what's happening. Or maybe their kindness is hoping that it will lead to another kind of kindness that could be happening.

But to be kind is to be compassionate and tender. It's to do what is best for the other person even when we don't get credit for it, even when they don't deserve it. That's what it means to be kind.

Jesus actually sums up kindness perfectly in Matthew, chapter 7. He says:

"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets." Matthew 7:12 (NLT)

All that is taught in the law and the prophets. This is to say that all that is in the Bible all that is being said boils down to this: to treat other people how you would want to be treated. To think first of them. That is what it means to be kind.

Once again, this is what God is trying to produce in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit is God's divine character being cultivated in our lives by the power of the Spirit. This is not a work of our own, which tells us this:

God is kind.

And the first hurdle we're going to have to get over if we want to cultivate kindness in our lives is to believe that is true. God is kind. Do you believe that? Maybe you've heard God is love, but do you believe that He is kind? Over and over again we see His kindness and His love wrapped together.

Maybe if you're here today you would say, "I don't know if I'd describe God as kind." Maybe it's the opposite. Maybe you see that God is angry or bitter or mean or even cruel at times. I can tell you that it is only the work of the devil to betray a kind God as cruel or mean or angry. Because if you look at anything more than a clip, a soundbite, or a verse—if you look at the entirety of the Bible, what you will find is a kind God, a compassionate God, a tenderhearted God who extends Himself to us over and over and over again.

Think about this. There is a God who is all powerful, reigning over everything. He could lead any way that He wanted to. He could lead by power. He could lead by force. He could demand that we follow Him. But He doesn't. Look at how He leads Israel in Hosea 11:4. This is God speaking. He says:

"I led Israel along with my ropes of kindness and love." (NLT)

I love the picture of that. There are ropes that God has thrown down to His people of kindness and love and that is how He is leading them out of the life that they had fallen

into, out of the life that they had become accustomed to. He's pulling them into true life, pulling them into abundant life.

I have a feeling that a lot of us have our hands on ropes that are not made of God's kindness and love. So right now do you feel like God is leading you with ropes of kindness and love? Is that what you feel like you're being brought through your life with? Kindness and love.

Maybe if you're being honest it feels like you're holding on to some guilt and some shame. It feels like you're being led by anger, frustration, bitterness, resentment. It feels like that's what's being handed down to you and you're just trying to hold on making it through begrudgingly.

Can I just say this? If you are here today and you are holding on to anything other than love and kindness let today be the day when you drop those ropes. Drop those ropes that you've been holding on to and allow yourself to get to know this kind and loving and compassionate God. Grab on to those ropes of love and kindness and He will pull you closer to Himself. He will release you from all of those other things. But we have to believe that He is a kind God, or we'll never hold on.

Maybe you're sitting here thinking, "Okay. Maybe God is kind for Christians. Maybe God is kind for followers of Jesus, but He's definitely not kind with me. I mean, I don't even believe in Him. He wouldn't be kind to me. I've done a lot of messed up stuff. I really think God's pulled the kindness card. He's pulled the ropes back at this point."

Look at what Jesus says in Luke. He says:

"Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for He is..." say it, *"kind to those who are unfaithful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate."* Luke 6:35-36 (NLT)

So please hear that today. Let go of those ropes. And if you're wondering, "Is there going to be anyone there on the other side to drop down a rope, to give me a lifeline?" There is. We serve a kind God who wants a relationship with you and will lead you in a kind manner.

So God is kind. There we go. Not exactly fireworks but I'll take it. A little clap. God is kind.

Here's the question:

Are you kind?

We would all say that we want to be kind. We'd love to be kind. We're kind sometimes. But I'm talking about an unbreakable kindness. I'm talking about Chick-fil-A kindness. Do you know what I mean? There is not a situation where you can break those people.

Saturday Night Live actors break character more than Chick-fil-A employees. The Royal Guard, those people in front of palaces, they break more than Chick-fil-A employees.

I've never seen anything like it, and I've worked in food for a long time. What's normal is anger. What's normal is frustration. I've seen so many people almost get into a fight through a drive-thru window. That's what it means to work in fast food. You have this beeping in your ear. You have people shouting and yelling. You're trying to move at super speed, and you're being met with not the greatest of people. They are in a hurry. They are trying to get something. They are trying to get a Ruth's Chris meal for \$4.99 and they are upset with anything that is less.

But not Chick-fil-A. You can't break them. You could go there, not today, but tomorrow. Go through the drive-thru and say, "Hey, can I get a taco?" Go to Burger King and try the same thing. They will make fun of you and your whole family. It will be a bad situation.

Go to Chick-fil-A and say, "Can I get a taco?" They'd be like, "Oh, well I'm glad you asked. Hey, listen, buddy. We don't have tacos, but we have an amazing Southwest salad. I can even put that thing on a wrap for you. It's almost like a burrito. What do you say, pal?" Or, "Hey, there's actually a Taco Bell across the street. If you pull into spot six over here, I'll run over there and get you a burrito and bring it back here."

It's like, this is amazing. But that's the kind of kindness I want to have. That's the kind of kindness that the world needs. No matter the situation we find ourselves in, we continue to produce this kind of kindness.

So what is it? Why are we not as kind as we want to be? Well, I just want to grab a few things that we'll just call:

Killers of kindness.

Killers of kindness that I think show up in our lives from time to time. The first one is:

Coveting

Coveting. I like the word *coveting* because it's not a word that you use most of the time, right? It's not like you were hanging out yesterday, "Hey. How's it going?"

"Pretty good, just struggling with coveting. Everything else is good."

No, it is a unique word but it's the idea of yearning for, desiring something that someone else has and allowing that to be what you focus on. And it will steal away all that God has done for you because kindness is all about using what you do have to serve those around you. And if you constantly focus on what you don't have, it's going to take your kindness. It's going to be really hard to be kind to someone who has what you think you should have or has what you don't think he should have anyway. It becomes really hard to be kind.

The second one is:

Competition

I don't think I realized how competitive a culture we live in until I left this country, alright? About a couple of months ago I left the country for the first time, and I really left the country. I went to Africa—way away. It took a long time to get there. I went to Kenya on a mission trip. It was one of our partners, Mission of Hope.

And really quick, it's an unbelievable organization started about 20 years ago. This Kenyan couple believed that God placed on their heart to start schools in the slums of Kenya, and they did. By faith they stepped out and started one school. Twenty years later they have 30 schools, over 30,000 kids enrolled. They helped plant and start 30 churches. And they have a plan in the next 10 years to go to 100 schools 100,000 students and 100 churches. Unbelievable people. And you can just see the fruit of the Spirit on them.

We got to see the schools and the churches and the staff and the pastors. But if I never would have left the car, I would have known enough about their culture. That's how kind they were. How uncompetitive they really were.

I'm telling you, in Kenya most roads are one lane each way, but they turn them into about two-and-a-half or three lanes going each way. It is the most fluid thing I've ever seen in my life. Cars are driving and they are just going back and forth. No one is speeding up. No one is trying to not let others get in. No one is making signals to others—it's happens over and over again.

They honk, but it's the cutest little honk. It's not like the aggressive, all your weight on it. It's just like a little beep. And this is what they were doing, "Come on over, buddy. Get in here. Get in here." It's like they are all helping each other get to the same place. It is beautiful.

And I was telling someone that this would never happen in my country. He said, "Tell me about it." I'm like, "Okay, it's basically like they are trying to make sure that you can't get where you are going and if you make a mistake they make you feel like the worst person in the world."

I'm telling you, I was back not even a week, and I was on a side of town that I don't normally drive in, and the lanes split so I ended up being in a turn only lane and I needed to be going straight. So I put my turn signal on and I'm trying to get over. There is a guy behind me who is trying to get into the Kroger, and he starts laying on his horn and yelling out the window that I am the dumbest person in the world. That's the PG version of what he was giving me. And I just looked back, and it immediately brought back the Kenya run. I'm like, "Man, you would never make it in Kenya. You just don't get it."

But we will not be kind if all we see people as is competition. We're trying to take their spot. We're trying to make sure that they will never catch us. It's this cutthroat culture that we live in. But I'm telling you, we can embrace this idea that I'm not competing with you, that I can do my best and I can encourage you to do your best and there is actually plenty of room on the top. There is this lie that we believe that there is only room for one of us. There is plenty of room for all of us. And, if you actually take this seriously and you become kind and encouraging with other people, serving them, chances are you will actually move forward faster than you would just trying to hold everyone back.

Competition is one of those things that steal our kindness. We won't be kind to people we are trying to compete with.

The last one is:

Convenience

Man, convenience can kill some kindness. Here's what happens with convenience. When our lives get built around convenience, we become self-absorbed. We become worried about being able to do what we want to do when we want to do it. Our lives become about doing things the most efficient way possible so that we can get back to our driveway, open the garage door, slide in, get into our sweatpants, enjoy a show, and push everything else out.

I'm not saying that there is not use for convenience, but convenience is a tool. It can't be the ultimate thing, right? I put systems in place that are convenient for me so that I can do the things that really matter, and I can get the most out of them.

Hear this thought. The path of least resistance never leads to kindness. The path of least resistance never leads to kindness. If our lives are all about efficiency and convenience and making it easy on ourselves, it's never going to put us in a place to want to serve the person in front of us, because it is never convenient to be kind. It is always going to cost something of me: my time, my resources, my energy—all of that.

So listen. Staying with kindness is actually, "I'm going to place convenience down a few pegs for me to be able to be kind." If convenience is ultimate, kindness will always be last.

So those are some of the killers of kindness. What about the other side? We've already said that it is only God who can produce kindness in our lives, true kindness, Biblical kindness, divine character kind of kindness.

But we've also said that there is this collaboration between us and God. He uses the word *fruit*. So we can think about it here with earthly fruit and farmers, right? There is a collaboration. A farmer is working really hard, they plant, and they water, and they protect, and they do all of those things, but at the end day they also need God to provide what only He can provide.

So there are some things that we can do this week to help cultivate and help to partner with God to produce this kind of fruit in our lives. I just want to give you a few things that we all can do this week.

The first one is:

Pray for it.

This is often the one that gets missed and is the one that we need to start with the most. Pray. Pray for kindness. And I just wrote a quick prayer. It's something that you can take a picture of. You can write it down. Use this this week to set up your day before you go in and before you are met with some unkindness. Make this a prayer to God. Here it is:

Father, lead me with ropes of kindness and love. Produce in me Your unending kindness. Show me a need that I can meet today and give me the courage to see it through. Keep my heart tender throughout the day as I offer it in loving service to the world.

Start each day.... If we want to be kind start each day asking God to fill us with His Spirit to produce that kind of supernatural, unbreakable kindness in our lives. That's the first thing we can do.

The second thing that we can do is:

Create a list of all the ways God has been kind to us.

Once again, these things, I'm telling you, there is so much power to just take a moment and say, "God, how have You been kind to me?" He's been so kind to us. He woke us up. He allowed us to go through our day. He gave us the friends that we have. He gave us the family that we have. He gave us the jobs. All good things. All gifts from heaven that pass through His hands to get to us.

So how is He kind? Well, He's forgiven us. Over and over again He has extended His kindness to us. Thank you. He's provided a way for salvation for eternal life. He's been so kind to us.

I'm telling you, if you just sit in that, that time in prayer asking God for kindness, and then spending a little bit of time just creating a list in your mind or on paper of all the ways that God has been kind to you, you will begin to overflow with kindness.

Here's where that leads you to. Find someone to be kind to every day this week. So many missed opportunities, I know in my life, and in yours as well. Take just a moment of kindness: a text message, an email, lunch, coffee, just a moment to share with someone what they mean to you, how they are inspiring you.

And it's not even just on the encouragement part. Remember: faithful are the wounds of a friend. It could be something that you're going to sit down and it's going to take a lot out of you but it's the kind thing to do. You're going to call out a blind spot in somebody in grace and in truth and in love. But you're going to do it to be kind to someone.

I mean, if you're in that prayer time and you're asking God to produce that within you, I'm guessing He's going to bring someone to the surface that you can be kind to. If He doesn't give you an exact person, a specific person, just find someone who is breathing. Everybody can use a little bit of kindness. Life is so hard. Our inner critics are so loud. A little bit of kindness will go a long way. Find someone every day this week to be kind to.

Here's what you're going to need if you're going to do that:

Have a plan to be kind.

Have a plan to be kind. Once again, convenience will take the driver's seat unless we have a plan for what we are going to do.

"I'm in prayer. I'm asking for it. I have a name. Okay, what is my plan? How am I going to do it? Am I going to buy him coffee? Am I going to take him to lunch? Am I going to send him a really long text message that he's kind of mad that he got, but it's also pretty great? An email?

"Am I going to do the unthinkable even? I'm talking crazy here. Call him on the phone." You're probably going to have to leave a voicemail, send a text message to have him call you back. But just for him to hear your voice and to hear your kindness and love on the other side of it.

Have a plan to be kind with people in your life.

And then here's the biggest challenge and it's the most kind thing we can do:

Share the gospel with someone.

I don't care what you do with your life, the most kind thing that you will ever do is share the good news of Jesus with another person. It carries the most weight. But we have to be in a place where we are seeing other people doing what you would want them to do for us. In a spirit of kindness, share the gospel with others. That Jesus is the kindness of God personified. That is who He is.

Titus, chapter 3, sums it up perfectly, wrapping up the good news and the kindness of God together. Look at this. It says:

"But when our God, our Savior revealed his..." I'm telling you, once you begin to see God as kind you see it over and over again in the Scripture, *"... our Savior revealed His kindness and love he saved us, not because of the righteous things that we have done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth, a new life through*

the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.” Titus 3:4-7 (NLT)

Come on.

The kindness of God is wrapped up in the good news of Jesus Christ. It has always been God’s kindness that has drawn us in. It is not what we have done or what we will do. It’s His kindness. And I love the way Romans 2 talks about this. He has come. He has done everything. He has initiated. He has led us with it. Look at this. Romans 2. It says:

“Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you. Does this mean nothing to you? Can’t you see that his kindness is intended to turn you away from sin?”
Romans 2:4 (NLT)

God has come close and what He has used over and over again are these ropes of kindness. I love the way that *The Message* translates this verse. It says:

“God is kind, but he is not soft. In kindness he takes us firmly by the hand and leads us into a radical life-change.” Romans 2:4 (MSG)

This is the good news. The ropes of kindness and love became flesh and blood in the form of Jesus Christ the Son of God. And it is now not just ropes, it is a hand reaching out to draw people closer and closer to God.

I want us to see the order of this. It is the kindness of God that leads people to repentance, that leads them to turn away from their sin. It is not the other way around. It is not repent, it is not turn, it is not act better then you will receive the kindness of God. No. We saw this earlier. God is kind to the unthankful, to the wicked. It is while we were still enemies that Christ decided to die for us. We cannot get this order wrong with ourselves and with other people who believe that it is kindness that leads them to God.

Jesus modeled this perfectly over and over again during His ministry on earth. He was kind to people who no one was kind to. He was kind to people that no one would even associate with: like prostitutes, women who had been marginalized, women who had been pushed away, no one even looked or made eye contact with them. And He would sit with them.

Once He was sitting with this woman and all of these religious leaders around Him said, “If He really was a prophet, if He knew who He was sitting next to, He would not be sitting so close to her.” But He sat with her, and He met her, and it was kindness that led her to repentance.

With lepers—not just people who they wouldn’t even look at, they wouldn’t touch a leper. They would cross the road. They would move as far away as they could. Everyone was

keeping their distance from them. And it probably felt like God was too, until Jesus came. He began to touch the untouchable. And He healed them. And He drew close to them. And it was His kindness that brought them to God. Taking them firmly by His hand and bringing them into that life-change. The kindness of Jesus.

Maybe one of my favorite examples of this is with Jesus and Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. He was a very corrupt individual. He exploited the poor. He exploited his own people. He raised their taxes to line his pockets. He was hated by everyone. No one would talk to this guy. He had chosen a team and he had chosen the wrong one. He was the worst of the worst. But he still had this want. Even though he had all of this money, even though he did very well, he still had this yearning for something more.

And he heard about this Jesus who was going from town to town and healing people and meeting people. And I'm guessing he probably thought that if He could meet with all of those kinds of people, that He could even meet with prostitutes and lepers, then maybe He could even meet with him, "All I want to do is just get a sight of Him. I just want to see Him."

So Zacchaeus runs ahead, and he does what little people do. I understand this. For those of us who are vertically challenged, you've got to get up higher. So he climbs a tree and that's where he is. I'm guessing never in a million years that he would even think that Jesus would acknowledge him. But as Jesus is walking with crowds all around Him, look at what Jesus says:

"Quick! Come down." You goober. "I must be a guest in your home today.' Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house with great excitement and joy."

You do not run to a God unless there are those ropes of love and kindness. You don't come with excitement and joy to shame and fear. No. But when it is love and kindness you come in excitement and joy and that's exactly what Zacchaeus did.

And it says:

"Meanwhile Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, 'I will give half of my wealth to the poor, Lord. And if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!'"

Notice the order. There was kindness that brought him to repentance. And then look at how Jesus responds.

"Salvation has to this home today for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." Luke 19:5-6, 8-10 (NLT)

You know something that will make it a lot easier to be kind to people that you don't understand? People who don't believe what you believe, to see them as lost. Not as evil or bad, but as lost. Much more kind as someone who is lost.

And Jesus met Zacchaeus. Over and over again in the gospels He met people. Over and over again and it was kindness that drew them in, it drew all of them in.

So what I want to challenge us with this week is to go in kindness. To go and to begin to see people the way that God sees them. To have compassion for this world. For your heart to break. To ask God for that tender heart so that you can remain soft with other people.

That does not mean that you are soft, but that you can remain loving and kind no matter the situation. That you won't look for what you're going to get out of it, how this will better you, but you've laid down that cutthroat lifestyle of competition and said, "I'm here to serve you." It is kindness that will draw people.

As we go from here let's bear that fruit of kindness. Let the first taste of kindness that people receive this week be from you. That you can be that type of a person, no matter your background, no matter if you're saying, "I'm the furthest thing from kind," God's hand produces kindness in you even when there is no kindness.

So what I want to ask everyone to do at all of our campuses, just stand to your feet. And what we're going to do is we're going to pray together, and then we are going to worship, and then our prayer as we go from here is that we unleash the kindness of God. That's what the world needs. And by the grace of God He can produce that in all of us.

And if you're here today and you're saying, "I want that. I want to step in to that kind of life. I want that kind of kindness. I want to know what it means to be loved like that. I want to love others with that kind of kindness," we just want you to know that we are here for you. We're going to have people at all of our campuses at the front of the stage who would love to meet with you and pray with you and talk about what it looks like to step into a relationship with Jesus, to step into the hands of kindness and love.

Would you pray with us?

God, we thank You so much for today. God, we thank You for where You've brought us. Father, I pray that You would lead us with ropes of kindness and love. God, that You would cultivate within us a supernatural kindness fused with compassion, with tenderness, and genuinely wanting what is best for the other person.

God, help us to be compassionate as You are compassionate. God, I pray that if there is anything in us that is killing our kindness, whether that's coveting, or competition, or convenience—God, let this be the moment where we lay it all down.

God, if we've been holding on to any ropes other than love and kindness, I pray that this would be the moment that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we could let go. Those are not leading us to love. Those are not leading us to kindness. Those are not leading us to a fruitful life.

But, God, allow us to grab hold of You. God, thank You for lowering down that rope. Thank You for lowering down Your hand and pulling us firmly into the light that You have for us. Cultivate that kind of kindness in us, Jesus. Bear that fruit within us.

Jesus, we surrender all to You. And we believe all things are possible by Your Spirit. Jesus, it is Your perfect name that we pray. Amen.