

Dear Friends,

2Timothy 3:1 **But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.** ESV—This word difficulty in the Greek can be described as hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous, harsh, fierce, savage! These words describe the times we are living in now!

I could go on and on about the problems in the world but as Born Again Christians we are to be a light in difficult times not part of the problem. Recently in my devotion with Blackaby's Experiencing God Day by Day I was confronted with the command by Paul to be kind to people! After reading Blackaby's thoughts I realized that I grew up in a hostile environment that was constantly putting people down often by making fun of them. Also, I am convicted of my enjoyment of 'standup' comedians. I've realized that much of what they say is to make fun of or put down(be unkind) to others and sometimes themselves. I'm going to work harder at being kind, to everyone, and especially fellow Christians.

Ephesians 4:32 **And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**

From Blackaby's book— The Book of Ephesians describes the behavior that ought to characterize Christians as they relate to one another. **Our actions ought to be permeated with kindness.** Kindness is love expressed in practical ways; it is putting the needs of others before our own. It is intentionally considering ways to meet other people's needs. Being tenderhearted means that we are aware of the feelings of others. When a fellow Christian experiences sorrow, we grieve also (1 Corinthians 12:26). When another believer is joyful, we too, rejoice. Being tenderhearted means showing compassion toward those around us. We give forgiveness because we, too, fall short of God's ideal. Knowing that God has graciously saved us from destruction motivates us to forgive others when they offend us. Often we are less patient with our fellow Christians than we are with nonbelievers. We expect more of Christians, and we feel betrayed when they fail us. When this happens, we need to look closely at the cross and remember the forgiveness we received there. We must set aside the self-centered attitude that leads to impatience and criticism of others. Jesus did not say that the world will know Him by our miracles, by our grand testimonies, or by our vast Bible knowledge. The world will know Him by the love that Christians show to one another.

John 13:34-35 **A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**

Ask God to give you kindness, a tender heart, and a forgiving spirit. As you allow the Spirit to build these qualities into you, your life will be a blessing to others around you.

Just want to say thank you for all your kindness and prayers for Alpha, Debi and me !! God bless you for all your gifts! You make it possible for us to help people who might never otherwise get the help they need.

Richard

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