Discussion Questions for *Love Kindness*

1. In his introduction, Dr. Corey tells of losing his father, whose “influence ran deep and wide, showing up in kindness lavished liberally” (page xii). Have you known people who exemplify kindness in this way? What impressed you most about them? How have they influenced your own life?

2. The author says he “wrote this book out of frustration that those who represent the gospel are often caustic and harsh, picking fights with those whose views are hostile to theirs. In other words, Christians are often starting with *unkindness*” (page xiii). Have you observed this to be true? Why do you think this is?

3. How does kindness differ from niceness? What role does the Holy Spirit play in kindness?

4. Dr. Corey talks about three types of people: those with the harshness of firm centers and hard edges, those with the weakness of spongy centers and soft edges, and those with the kindness of firm centers and soft edges. Which of these describes you before reading this book? Which of these would you like to be? Why?

5. In your own words, explain what it means to be “receivable,” as Dr. Corey’s father described it (pages 3–4). Think about people in your life who need to receive God’s love. In what ways could you be more “receivable” to them so that they in turn are more open to Jesus?

6. In what way is authenticity part of kindness, as described in chapter 2? What “messiness” or uncertainty have you experienced in your own life? How might God use your authenticity about those struggles to be an encouragement to others?

7. Can you relate to Dr. Corey’s humbling experiences of throwing out the first pitch and being pulled over by campus security? Describe a similar experience of your own. How do we find a healthy place of humility, between self-berating and self-inflating, that enables us to lead with kindness? Consider the words of Jeremiah 9:23-24 in your response.

8. In chapter 4, the author says, “In Jesus’ way of kindness, we can be confident in our beliefs and also comfortable listening to those with differing views” (page 54). How can we enter into conversations about topics such as human sexuality without losing either our “firm center” or our “soft edges”?

9. What does Dr. Corey mean by “permeable edges” (page 89)? How can this help us in conversations with those who expect us to be intolerant or judgmental of their beliefs or lifestyles?

10. The author says, “Multitasking is the curse of presence” (page 92). How have you found this to be true in your own life? What changes could you make to be sure you are “all-in” for hurting people who need your presence?

11. In light of the story of Leah in chapter 7, how would you respond to someone who says, “God can’t use me, not with my background. I have nothing to offer Him”? How will this story help you to see people from God’s point of view, finding the extraordinary in the ordinary?

12. Dr. Corey claims that “More and more the nonreligious are resistant to the adjective *Christian* . . . More and more we are defined . . . by our compartmentalized faith” (pages 129–130). Why do you think this is happening “more and more”? In what specific ways can we as Christians change our attitudes and behaviors to avoid coming across as hypocritical or self-righteous?
13. Which stage of life are you closer to—the guitarist in need of a mentor or the fiddler ready to share his life experiences (see chapter 9)? Regardless of your life stage, in what ways can you come alongside others to mentor them and point them toward God?

14. The author says, “The path to being heard by those who do not know Christ sometimes begins over an authentic dinner conversation” (page 171). How comfortable are you with the idea of inviting a non-Christian friend to enjoy a meal with you? How might you make hospitality a more intentional part of your life?

15. Think about situations in which your kindness has been rejected. Did this discourage you from reaching out in kindness in other situations? Why or why not? What should be our motivation, regardless of how our kindness is received? (See Luke 6:35.)

16. Dr. Corey says, “Pride more than anything else gets in the way of kindness, and it shows up in our aversion to being scorned” (page 192). How can we move from potentially awkward me-centeredness to others-centeredness in extending kindness?

17. Review the author’s seven suggestions for “softening our edges,” beginning on page 201. Do you agree with his assessment? Would you add anything to this list? Which of these come easily for you? Which are more challenging? Why?

18. In his concluding words, the author says: “Conviction without courage goes nowhere. Courage without conviction goes anywhere. Conviction with courage goes somewhere” (page 225). Explain what he means by these statements.

19. Dr. Corey says our Christian witness erodes “when Christians take it upon themselves to respond with anger and acidic spirits. Equally condemnable . . . are those who are aloof” (page 227). What potential damage can be done by either of these stances? Why is it important to embody courage, conviction, and civility together?

20. Looking back over the ideas presented in this book, which were most startling or unexpected to you? Which were most life-changing? Name one or two specific ways in which you hope to become more effective at expressing the virtue of kindness.