

How To Receive Respect From Others

We live in a society where we encounter inconsiderateness constantly, people treat each other with insolence.

We have to endure people who are ill-mannered, impertinent, impolite, uncouth, tactless and rude.

The root cause of rudeness is selfishness, *“I’m going to get or do what I want, if you are hurt in the process that’s your fault for getting in the way.”*

1 Corinthians 13:5 [NIV] *“.. love is not rude...”*

1 Corinthians 13:5 [Phillips Translation] *“love has good manners.”*

The antidote to rudeness is found in:-

1 Peter 2:17 [NIV] *“Show proper respect to everyone...”*

Not only those who are more important, wealthy, attractive or bigger than we are, but everyone.

Does this include showing respect to:-

Our children? Yes!

Husband or wife? Yes!

My mother-in-law? Yes!

The obnoxious person at work? Yes!

To people I don’t even know? Yes!

To those who wake me up in the small hours playing loud beat music? Yes!

To the drunk or junkie on the pavement? Yes!

To everyone? Yes!

Why should I show respect to such people?

a) I will show respect to all people because God created everyone

Psalm 8:5 [Good News Bible] *“You [God] made man inferior only to yourself, you crowned him with glory and honour.”*

People are the “crown” of God’s creation. Even the most obnoxious person we know, God says I made him, he is one of my created children, I gave him life.

Hebrews 1:3 [NIV] *“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

Sustaining all things includes the drunk or junkie in the alleyway.

Because we are all created and sustained as living creatures by God we all deserve the same respect from others.

We tend to be polite to those whom we think are above us in the social status and rude to those whom we think are below us in status, but God says *"they are all mine."*

b) I will show respect to all people because Jesus died for everyone

John 3:16 [NIV] *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

God loves all people enough to sacrifice His only Son to save them.

John 6:51 [NIV] *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

Christ willingly sacrificed his body so that the world, all mankind, could live.

2 Corinthians 5:19 [NIV] *"that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."*

God's plan is to have a loving relationship with all people, this is the message we have been given to preach.

The cross shows us how valuable God considers all people. We may not consider some people as of great worth but God doesn't agree with our judgement.

Jesus Christ is going to be watching you and I to see how we treat people that He died for!

Matthew 26:31-32, 40 [NIV] *"Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered." But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." ... Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter."*

We are going to be judged by how we treated other people for whom Jesus Christ died. If we read the whole of this passage of scripture it will show that how we show respect to others, essentially those in need. This is the yardstick by which we will be judged by God.

How do we know if we are a true believer?

1 John 4:20 [NIV] *"If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."*

We look at our relationships with other people as well as with God.

c) If we cannot show respect to other people by treating them in a loving way we do not love God

We are not a Christian, a believer, for God is love.

Jesus was gracious towards all people including those whom the religious leaders of His day rejected.

John 8:3-11 [NIV] *"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?"*

*They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. **"Then neither do I condemn you,"** Jesus declared. **"Go now and leave your life of sin."***

The first thing Jesus did was to protect her dignity by defending her before her accusers. Then in the privacy of a one-on-one conversation, Christ dealt with her sin. Jesus was showing respect towards her in contrast to the rudeness of the Pharisees.

Luke 15:1-2 [NIV] *"Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, **"This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."***

The Pharisees could not understand or agree with the way Jesus associated with the most rejected members of that day society. The tax collectors, the prostitutes, the lepers, etc., all of whom were rejected and abused by the Pharisees and others in society following their example.

If this is the way Jesus Christ treated all people and Jesus is living in me through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, this is the way I will treat all people today. I will treat everyone with dignity and respect.

We may have all the right beliefs but if we are rude then we are wrong, because love is not rude.

d) I will show respect to all people because I will receive exactly what I give

Galatians 6:7-10 [NIV] *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. **A man reaps what he sows.** The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. **Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**"*

This is the reciprocal law of life, whatever we sow we will reap.

Luke 6:38 [NIV] *"**Give, and it will be given to you.** A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*

Whatever in life we need, give it away; for this is how we receive.

If we want to be respected by other people give them respect.

Hosea 10:12 [NIV] *"**Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.**"*

We should be constantly looking for new ground in which to sow seeds of love. We break up that fallow ground by showing respect towards all other people, which makes them receptive to our message of love and mercy from God.

If we want people to smile at us we have to first smile at them.

I have given myself a challenge: I am to create and capture 50 smiles a day. Every time I catch a person's eye I give them a smile to take away with them wherever they are going. I have created more friendships in my community by this method than any other way. There are some people whom I am

yet to talk to but every time they see me we exchange a smile and a wave of the hand. Life is then given a pleasurable moment for both of us.

How then do we show respect to people?

a) When we speak to people, we are tactful not just truthful.

The major way we are rude to people is with the words that spew out of our mouths.

Proverbs 15:33 [Good News Bible] *“What a joy it is to find just the right word for the right occasion!”*

This is tactfulness, thinking before we speak. Putting our mind in gear before the words drive out of our mouth.

The way we say something can make the thought positive or negative to the one who is receiving it.

Proverbs 15:4 [Good News Bible] *“Kind words bring life but cruel words crush your spirit.”*

We need to be considering what the reaction will be in the mind of the person we are conversing with.

Try to place ourselves in their shoes to be on the receiving end of our remark when feeling how they must be because of the circumstances they are experiencing.

The foundation of good relationships is tactfulness. It is relational lubrication; it smoothes the way to building strong and loving relationships.

Tactfulness minimises friction between people, for when we use tact we have less to retract.

Definitions of tact:-

Tact is what you thought but didn't say.

Tact is the ability to make a point without making an enemy.

Tact is when you tell someone to *“go jump off a cliff”* in such a way that they look forward to the journey.

Tact is treating everyone as if they knew what they were talking about when you know they don't.

Tact is telling someone that they are *“open minded”* when they are *“empty headed”*.

Tact is changing the subject without changing our mind.

The Bible definition of tact is:-

Ephesians 4:15 [NIV] *“speaking the truth in love...”*

People say that *“sticks and stones may break my bones but cruel words cannot hurt me.”*

This saying is completely untrue.

Bones can heal in a few weeks but unkind words can remain in a person's mind to haunt them for a lifetime, constantly bringing them pain.

One Pastor after preaching on the talents had a man come up to him and said *“my talent is the ability to speak my own mind”*. The Pastor's reply was *“perhaps that is one talent you should bury.”*

Before we are frank with someone we need to ask why am I going to say this about this person?

Is it to “*put them down*” to make me feel better?

Or is it going to be said in such a way that they know I’m trying to help them avoid making a painful mistake in their lives?

Am I trying to build them up?

Is what I am about to say going to build our relationship or break it down?

Be tactful not just truthful.

b) When we are served by people ... be understanding not demanding

Luke 6:31 [NIV] “*Do to others as you would have them do to you.*”

The “*golden rule*”: do we want people to be demanding of us? No!

So we shouldn’t be demanding of them.

Do we want people to be understanding of us? Yes!

So we should seek to understand their needs and feelings.

How do we treat people who serve us?

One of the tests of Christian character is how we treat a waiter or waitress.

Rudeness is the weak person’s imitation of strength.

Rudeness is always the indication of weakness and insecurity.

We need to be aware of the stress that those who are serving others are under!

A waitress may have had to deal with a long line of rude, disrespectful people that day up to the time she comes to serve us.

It is our responsibility as a Christian to help her relax, smile and enjoy serving us.

Proverbs 16:21 [Good News Bible] “*A wise and mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is.*”

If we want to be more persuasive with our children, husband, wife, employer, employees, friends or anyone we have a relationship with, then become understanding of their feelings and don’t be demanding.

I’m never persuasive when I’m abrasive.

The best place to practice this is in our home; we often are more polite to strangers than we are to those we live with all the time.

c) When we disagree with people be gentle not judgemental.

Romans 14:12-13 [NIV] “*So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.*”

As a Christian there are a great many things that happen in society that we disagree with. We don't always agree with the actions of other Christians.

We are **not** supposed to try and “*police*” all those who do not conform to our Christian beliefs.

Two things we need to remember when we disagree with others.

- a) Each of us will have to give an account of our lifestyle to God some day.
- b) Each of us needs to realise we are **not** God and others' lifestyles are **not** for us to judge, that is a job that God alone does being Sovereign.

Christians are accountable to each other in our relationship one with another but we are not in a position to judge others. We can disagree without being disagreeable.

We as Christians can have differing views on non-essential issues, which are mainly a product of differing culture and background.

James 3:16-17 [Good News Bible] *“Wherever there is jealousy or selfish ambition, there will be disorder ... but wisdom from above is ... peaceful, gentle and friendly.”*

If what we are about to say is wisdom from God it will be peaceful, gentle and friendly. When we see two people, Christians or not, who are disagreeing, we can know who is right by looking for the approach that is peaceful, gentle and friendly.

Be persuasive by being pleasant.

c) When we share our faith with people respect them don't reject them.

Colossians 4:5-6 [Jerusalem Bible] *“Be tactful with those who are not Christians ... talk to them agreeably and with a flavour of wit, and try to fit your answers to the needs of each one.”*

When we shoot an arrow of truth we need to dip the point in honey.

Some people can take what is the most positive message in the world the Good News of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ and turn it into a negative message.

These people “*beat people over the head*” with the gospel, evangelism which is a type of “*put down*” of others who are not of their group.

“I'm saved, you're not” – “I'm good, you're bad” – “I'm up, you're down” approach.

Real evangelism is just one beggar telling another beggar where to get bread.

We are no better than anyone else as Christians. We have just been shown things by God that are unmeasurable value and we want to share them with others.

The example of some TV or radio evangelists is a blast of anger against sinners from a self-righteous stance which is just one big “*put down*” of others.

No wonder not many people understand the Love of God from such examples of Christianity.

Jesus never spoke to people in such a manner, the Pharisees were rude and disrespectful as these TV evangelists but Jesus was gentle, kind, generous and respectful.

When we try to share our faith with others we should start with their needs first.

How does the Gospel help them in the situation they find themselves in at that very moment.

1 Peter 3:15 [Living Bible] *“Quietly trust yourself to Christ your Lord and if anyone asks why you believe as you do, be ready to tell them, and do it in a gentle and respectful way.”*

Let our light shine, don't act like a blow torch, you cannot burn people into the Kingdom of God.

d) When people are rude to us always respond politely

Romans 12:17, 21 [NIV] *“Do not repay evil for evil ... overcome evil with good.”*

If we respond to rudeness with rudeness, it only adds fuel to the fire of disagreement.

The natural response to rudeness is to return rudeness but this never pays, kindness does.

As we relate to others in the future let us always show proper respect to them.

Remember:-

- a) God created everyone, they are all His children by creation.
- b) Jesus Christ died for everyone.
- c) We show we are Christ-like when we show respect to all other people.

We receive respect only when we first give respect.

We show respect by:-

- a) When speaking we are tactful not just truthful.
- b) When served by people we are understanding not demanding.
- c) When we disagree with people we are gentle not judgemental.
- d) When we share our faith we respect them not reject them.
- e) When people are rude to us we respond politely with respect for them.

Why?

Because love is not rude and God is love, so we as His children should not be rude to others but respectful.

One last thought:-

It was something of an occasion in the village when the Duke of Wellington arrived, and when it became known that he intended to attend Divine Service and take Communion, the churchwardens took the matter very seriously. In fact, they let it be known that the Duke should be allowed to approach the Communion Table *alone*.

Sunday morning came, and everything went smoothly during the service, the other worshippers standing just a little apart, out of respect for the Victor of Waterloo. And then, when Wellington moved forward, the villagers instinctively made way for him.

For the local people, the spectacle was a deeply moving one. They were proud that their church should be honoured by so great a man, and they were glad that everything was going all right. But,

just as the priest was about to administer the sacrament, a poor old man caused consternation by stepping forward, and kneeling down by the side of the Duke. People gasped in astonishment. How could anyone dream of such a thing! There was a hurried consultation between the two churchwardens, and then one of them went forward and touched the man on the shoulder and whispered something in his ear.

At first the old man did not understand, but as he turned slightly, he saw that he was kneeling beside the nation's great leader, and he made as if he were going to retire to a less conspicuous place. He was just struggling to rise to his feet, when he felt himself firmly clasped by the hand, and wondered what was happening to him. Scarcely daring to move, he glanced again at the figure by his side, and then heard the Duke of Wellington say, '**Don't move. We are all equal here.**'

Prayer:

Help us to understand, O Father, that because your love is infinite, you can never love one of your children more than you love another.