

## **Love Notes: Be Understanding not Demanding**

Life is all about learning to love and one of the ways that

God builds our love, he tests it.

**The people who test our love are called– VDP’s...Very Draining People. You’re going to recognize every one of them when I mention them. There are Difficult people. There are Demanding people. There are Disappointing people and there are Destructive people.**

We have all four of these throughout our life.

For example, Difficult people. They’re just hard to work with. They’re cranky. They’re crazy makers. They can be immature. They’re a few FRIES short of a happy meal. Anyone know any difficult people....

The second type of person is a Demanding person. They’re aggressive. They tend to be stubborn. They tend to think they’re always right. They can be very self-centered because they’re not thinking about anybody else. They can be demeaning. It’s my way or the highway. Oftentimes they will expect perfection of you. Demanding people are pushy people.

A third type of person is a Disappointing person. They just let us down. They break promises and never follow through with their word. They say pizza at eight, but they don’t show up with pizza and they don’t show up at eight....They are unfaithful and they are not loyal.

Then there are Destructive people. It’s sad to say but these people mean to harm us. They can be deadly, deceitful and double-dealing....

**Here are four ways to deal with Very Draining People.**

**1 Corinthians 13:5 says, “Love is not rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and love keeps no record of when it has been wronged.”**

Let me encourage you to go home and read 1 Corinthians 13 in the New Living Translation.

Many judge their level of spirituality by how often they speak with tongues and outward standards.... And while both of those are good....

**The barometer of Christianity is measured by our love.**

**1 Corinthians 13 tells us that a number of things will cease ... .but love lasts forever.**

When we get this into our spirit and begin to build this level of love into our life we graduate from a BA degree to a Master's degree in love.

If I were to ask what form of rudeness irritates you the most, what would you say???

Let me give you my list.

**10. People who call you and then say, "Who is this?" NO!!! You tell me who *you* are before I tell you who *I* am.**

**9. People who slurp their food. Food should be seen and not heard.**

**8. People who honk their horn in traffic jams that are going nowhere. Just stupid....**

**7. People who don't clean up after themselves in a restroom. Leave things better than you found it.**

**6. People who light their cigarettes then hold it towards you.**

**5. People who cheat at the ten-item grocery express line. I counted – get out of the line, buddy! Take a hike!**

**4. People who run into your car in Kroger parking lot but don't let you know about it.**

**3. People who go slow in the left lane.**

**2. People who drive 40 in a 55.**

**1. People who come from the opposite direction and steal the parking spot you've been patiently waiting for.**

How do we respond in love to difficult people?

The Bible says "*Love is not rude.*" So **we must be tactful, not just truthful.**

One of the ways we can be tactful is simply by listening. It is rude to not let somebody finish their sentence. I do this all the time.

My brain (at times) can run fast and I think I know what people are going to say and I answer back. That's dumb!!!

Look what the Bible says about this – ***“Answering before listening is both stupid and rude.” Proverbs 18:13 MSG***

This concludes today's sermon!

We are rude because we jump to conclusions. We assume we know what other people are thinking. BUT...Love listens and love responds tactfully, not just truthfully and it does not interrupt.

**People with tact have less to retract.**

**Ephesians 4:31-32 CEV “Stop being bitter and angry and mad at each other. Don't yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude. Instead, be kind and merciful and forgiving. Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.”**

Notice it says don't yell at one another. Yeah! Don't curse at each other. **Profanity requires zero intelligence. You can teach a parrot to curse.**

**It was Eric Hoffer who said, “Rudeness is a weak man's imitation of strength.”**

Some people think they're being frank but they're just being rude. People who say, “I just speak my mind,” and they're proud of that.

Actually telling it like it is is not the best way to communicate.

**Telling it like it could be, telling it like it should be, telling it like it might be, that actually builds people up.**

Telling it like it is just labels people. If I came to you and said, “You're all messed up,” what does that do? *Yeah, I'm messed up. Look how messed up I am.*

“Telling it like it is” reinforces the negative.

I am very honest with people who are in my office seeking direction....but I'm not rude....

We should all be saying things like.....you could be a great woman of God. You could be a great man of God. You could make a difference with your life. That helps people move forward.

A lot of times frankness is honestly just rudeness. We need to ask ourselves, why am I saying it this way?

**Proverbs 16:21 GNT “A wise mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is.”**

Here is a thought **“We're never persuasive when we're abrasive.”** When I'm abrasive with my wife, when I'm abrasive with my kids, when I'm abrasive with anybody... I'm never persuasive.

If you've watched any of the political debates at the bottom of some of the channels there are graphs of whether people approved or disapproved of what they were saying at that second.

Noticed when either side goes on the attack the approval rating went down. We're never persuasive when we're abrasive.

Tact and tone go together. It's the way we say it. It's the tone of our voice.

In fact the tone can change the very meaning of the word. For instance, think of all the ways we can say “Hello.”

Read about a Little League game where the kids just got hammered by the opposite team. After it was over a kid came up and said “Your team sucks!” The kid looked at the boy and said, “You pitched a great game.”

I'm sure that kid went away wishing he hadn't said that. Because when we return good for evil it puts us in a different position. The Bible says....a gentle answer turns away wrath. Proverbs 15:1

How many have ever dealt with Demanding people?

These are the people who always want their way. Your way is always the wrong way and you can never quite please them.

So how do we respond to demanding people?

The Bible says, "*Love does not demand its own way*" so **I must be understanding, not demanding.**

**Proverbs 4:7 KJV "above all thy getting, get understanding." Get Understanding, don't be Demanding!!!!**

Jesus is the best example of this. **Philippians 2:6 NLT "Your attitude should be the same that Jesus Christ had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form."**

Anytime we hear somebody at a restaurant or at a ticket counter saying, "I have my rights!" they're demanding. Most of this is ego/pride....it's you feeling small inside.....and demanding makes you feel big!

One of the greatest tests of our character is how we treat the people who serve us. The waiters, the waitresses, the flight attendants, the people at fast food places, the person who delivers your mail, secretaries, employees, people who work with us.

How do we treat the people who help us out? Do we even notice them? Do we know their names?

The true measure of a person is how they treat someone who can do nothing for them. BTW....Americans have a pretty bad reputation for being demanding. Americans want it their way and they want it their way now.

We truly need a baptism of kindness ... .I would personally love to baptize some Christians in kindness.... Love is kind. Have I always been kind? No, this is why I need this message. Love is kind, love is gentle, love is good, love is self-control.

The secret of great service is simply respecting people. I went to a restaurant last Thursday. The waiter was rude but I just kept on being polite, saying no sir, yes sir, thank you....by the end of the meal.. He was a totally different waiter.. Why....just showed him some respect....

So here's our homework for this week. Let's practice being understanding, not demanding.

The best place to practice it? How about home?

**Sometimes, we're more polite to strangers than we are to the people in our lives.** That bothers me!!!!

Sometimes, I am not kind, and I am rude to the people I love the most.

I don't know if that bothers you but it bothers me. How could I be nice to strangers and not nice to those I say I love the most? We all could work on that!!!!

**Titus 3:2 GNT** *"Believers shouldn't curse anyone or be quarrelsome, but they should be gentle and show courtesy to everyone."*

Courtesy is showing love in little things.

A lot of marriages die from a lack of courtesy. Because the things we used to do for each other we don't do any more. The little niceties, the thoughtful things, the love notes, the cards, the flowers, the calls, – opening the door, or hey let-me-get-that-for-you.

How can we be more understanding of people who are demanding in our life?

The Bible tells us that patience comes from perspective.

The more we understand a person the more patient we're going to be with them.

Before we get sharp with anybody, we need to say, do we know their background? Do we know the battles they're going through right now? Do we know the burdens they're carrying? That's going to make us a lot more courteous to other people.

We often look at people and say....man look how far they have to go. But we don't stop and say, I wonder how far they've come?

Maybe they were raised in a family where they had no model of kindness, no model of courtesy.

Maybe they grew up in a very dysfunctional home and they've gotten this far and they ought to be applauded for that.

We always look at how far they've got to go. We don't look at how far they've come.

So we look at their background. We look at their battles, and we look at their burdens. What are the problems they're carrying?

Let me wrap this up....

Here's a love note: **Love is Understanding, not Demanding.**

***Proverbs 19:11 NIV "A man's wisdom [that means having that perspective] gives him patience. [Patience comes from perspective.] It is his glory to overlook an offense."***

Are you so touchy and irritable that anybody who walks past you and doesn't see you, you are offended?

The Bible says, it is a glory to a man's or woman's character to overlook an offense. Love lets it go.