

0108/0014 • Be Patient • August 25, 2019 • Hyatt Regency Westlake

Opening

Our topic last week was Be Kind. We said we needed to be kind for two reasons:

- 1) Because God in Christ has forgiven us
- 2) Because everything you do in other people's lives either magnifies fear and torment or faith and peace in their lives.

When you are kind to people, you actually release them from fear. They can walk away from their time with you calmer and more at peace than they have been all day. The opposite is also true. When you choose to be touchy, unkind or resentful, people will walk away from you hurt and confused. Their level of fear will rise as they try to identify what went wrong. The answer, again, is love. That's why 1 John 4:18 reads, *Perfect love casts our fear.*

This is the type of impact God wants you to have on others. As you are kind to people, you give them an escape from the torment fear has brought in and in turn, their responsiveness to God increases.

So, what exactly does God's love look like when we show it to others. Paul describes it well.

Supreme Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NKJ): *⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up. ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails.*

This isn't a comprehensive list but it is the beginning of the fruit your life needs to bear in order to bring reassurance and peace to people around you.

The Fruit We Are To Bear

Exhibits endurance: Verse 4: "Love suffers long" – this obviously refers to patience and endurance. When you choose patience, you love people no matter who they are or what they do. Their behavior could be so counter to the Word of God that you just want to wash your hands of them, but you continue doing what you can to love them without condition. You endure their disobedience. You endure their offensive behavior. You endure their shortcomings. You are patient with them because you know that love never fails. If you keep at this, you will eventually find a breakthrough somewhere.

Right about here is a good place for clarification: If you are being harmed or abused by someone else, get out of that situation. Patience doesn't mean you put yourself in harm's way but it does endure annoying habits, mistakes, conflict and miscommunication.

A different perspective: When you're not patient, you won't endure shortcomings. You will quickly wash your hands of somebody who doesn't live up to your expectation or isn't spiritual enough to be on your level. When you're not patient, you may try to lengthen the distance between you and that person. These actions tell people you dislike that they're not worthy of your friendship or love – God's love is not present in that.

Exhibits patience and kindness: Verse 4: “Love suffers long and is kind – Paul couples patience with kindness. It doesn’t let frustrated comments slip out that attack or demean the other person. If you want to be patient as God suggests, stop acting ugly and cultivate kindness to people, even when they don’t deserve it.

If you’re having a tough time giving this type of patience to someone, I’d suggest you think about the patience and kindness you receive from God. That always puts me back in my place. He gives to me every day what I don’t deserve!

When you are both patient and kind toward others, think of how much it settles their heart. They don’t need to wonder why you are frustrated or be concerned why you were so short with them. They can learn and grow in the situation they are facing, knowing that you are still going to be with them on the other side.

When you’re patient and kind to someone, that speaks of their value to you and, more importantly, the value they have to God.

This is so good I think we should keep going.

Values people: Verse 4: “Love does not envy.” Envy covets what somebody has. When you envy, you show no care for that person’s value as a human being. You depersonalize the relationship and focus on what you can gain from it.

Envy escalates the fear that people aren’t liked for who they are, they are liked for only what they have. That’s why your interest in others should be predicated on their personhood alone.

Certain assumptions are needed to value people.

Author Bob Buehl wrote this: “When we develop people and motivate people, even in an advertent way, it’s because we have the right assumptions about people.”

So, if we have the right assumptions about people, we will more likely value them and add value to their lives. It all begins with assumptions.

Assumption #1: Everyone wants to feel worthwhile in life.

When you get your shoes shined, compliment the shiner.

When the trash truck arrives weekly, get your children out there to say “Hi!” and give them Christmas cards.

Ask them questions, so they can provide answers. When you leave, they will feel useful.

Assumption #2: Everyone needs and responds to encouragement.

One way to do this is during the first thirty-seconds of talking to someone, say something affirming about them, before you get into the purpose for the conversation.

Assumption #3: People buy into you before they buy into what you are doing or selling.

They don’t buy into what you are doing unless they first buy into who you are.

An article about Christopher Columbus was headlined:

Before He Could Sail, He Had To Sell

“Most of us think of Christopher Columbus as a great discoverer, but he was also a master sales person. Before he could begin his voyage, he had to sell what to his contemporaries was an utterly ridiculous idea.

Consider the circumstances and the conditions stacked against him. First, there was absolutely no market for a trans-Atlantic voyage. And hundreds of years of superstition practically guaranteed that there never would be. Second, although Christopher Columbus

had made sea voyages as a passenger, he had never been the captain of a ship. Third, Columbus was a foreigner. He was an Italian living first in Portugal and then Spain. Fourth, Columbus did not have sufficient money to fund such an adventure. In fact, the only one who could legally fund a voyage of discovery was the head of state - a king or queen. So, his prospect list was rather short. Fifth, his price was not cheap. In addition to needing ships and support, Columbus had a long list of personal demands including:

- a. a 10% commission on all commerce between his discovery and the mother country*
- b. the title the Admiral of the Ocean Sea*
- c. the permanent position of Governor of all the new territories*
- d. all the honors and rights that he would have to be passed on to his heirs*

Remarkably, Columbus made the sell. Columbus was propelled by a single-minded passion. His wholehearted belief that he could reach Asia by crossing the Atlantic. Even though his belief was wrong it gave him inner stamina, conviction and confidence to make the sell. Columbus never stopped closing. He didn't mind asking for the order over and over and over. He spent seven years asking King John of Portugal to fund the voyage. Then he went to Spain and worked on Ferdinand and Isabella for seven more years before he finally got his 'Yes.' How true this is. They had to buy into Columbus. They didn't buy into the voyage or the new land. The moment he convinced them he was someone they could take stock in, everything else was taken care of.

Assumption #3: Most people don't feel valued.

Although most people desire position, self-esteem, financial independence, if you put a gun in their back and said, "I'm going to pull the trigger unless you give me your game plan for success," most would say, "Pull the trigger."

We can help change that by valuing people and encouraging them.

Exhibits humility: Verses 4+5: "Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up. Does not behave rudely, does not seek its own."

People who tend to talk much about personal accomplishments are often insecure about their own self-worth. They have to lift up what they have done to feel important; in doing so, however, they reinforce other people's insecurity and frustration.

Love doesn't do that. Love humbly does the opposite. It elevates the importance of others and is interested in what they bring to the table. When you elevate what others have done and extol their accomplishments, you take away insecurity and frustration in their lives.

They will know that when they are with you, they are a success.

Humility always looks for ways to help other people, instead of helping yourself – not because you want to obligate or ingratiate them to you. Humility does not manipulate people's emotions for the intent of getting on their good side or getting ready to ask them a favor. Humility gives to others with no strings attached.

Thinks the best: Verses 5-6: "⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;"

When someone else provokes you, you refuse to think evil of them. You purpose not to dwell on the frustration, and instead, remind yourself about what God says about that person.

In the same way, when someone fails and sin is brought into the open, you don't rejoice. Love doesn't rejoice in somebody's failure. It rejoices in truth.

Sets the past aside: Verse 7: “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

When you love people, you believe the best about them, even when they have messed you up in the past. You set hurts aside and choose to love with the God-kind of love. As you do, you can bring God’s purpose to bear in their lives.

This best believing will be evidenced in your words, behavior and actions. People who know they aren’t the best or haven’t done the best can be encouraged when they realize someone believes they can still reach for the best in their lives.

Love wins: Verse 8: “Love never fails.”

(Amplified Bible): *Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end].*

When we act as described in these verses, we bring peace to situations and peace to people. We give them the chance to allow their fear-based thinking to fade away as they realize God loves them exactly as they are. That reassurance ultimately opens them up to receive more from God, just like God’s love opened us up.

The good news we need to hear is that Jesus loves us and made the way possible for us to have relationship with God.

Nicodemus

When Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, a teacher of the law, and said, “unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” He was saying that being religious, moral and good isn’t the way to eternal life. Those things don’t gain you entry to heaven.

Thief on the Cross

When He spoke to the thief on the cross and said he would be with Him in paradise, He was saying that people don’t go to hell because of sins committed. He was saying, in essence, the reason people go to hell is because they do not receive Himself into their hearts as Savior and Lord.

Present Jesus

First, man is alienated from God. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Rom 3:23.

Second, God’s gift reunites man with God. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” Rom. 6:23.

Third, you must receive Jesus. “As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God” Jn 1:12.

Fourth, receiving involves believing and confessing. “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation” Rom 10:9, 10.

Fifth, the Bible is God speaking to you. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” Rev 3:20.

Prayer to Follow Jesus (as needed): “Dear God in heaven, thank you for loving me unconditionally. Thank you for sending Jesus to die for me. I receive Him now into my heart, believing His blood cleanses me from all sin. I surrender my entire self to You and determine to become a follower of Jesus Christ.”

Ask for An Indication For Salvation

Transition Prayer: “Now, Father, we pray for each individual who has responded to You in any way this day, whether to receive Christ into their heart and become a follower of Jesus or to act upon Your Word in some way. I thank you for granting each one the peace, strength and wholeness each heart yearns for, in Christ’s name, amen.”