

## How to Be Respectful to Others

1 Peter 2:17

Tonight we are going to continue in our series on "Life's Values." In this segment we will be looking at another one of those endangered character qualities that you do not find too often in our society. And that is the quality of respect.

We live in a very rude world. Today, very few people respect the government, educational institutions, big business, the post office, law enforcement, religious institutions, etc. Our favorite kind of humor today is sarcasm -- put down humor.

The Bible makes it very clear that respect is one of those values that a stable family is built on, a stable life is built on. It is even the framework for a civilized society. If there is no respect among people or rights and for responsibilities and for each other, then civilization decays.

All of us want to be respected. That is one of your basic needs in life. You want other people to treat you with dignity. So in this segment we are going to look at how you give and get respect. They are the same thing. The way you get respect is the way you give it.

We are going to see four reasons why the Bible says you should respect everybody regardless of their lifestyle, regardless of their decisions, regardless of their behavior or beliefs. The Bible says every person should be treated with respect. Why?

1. Because God made everybody. Psalm 8:5 says, "You (God) made man inferior only to yourself; you crowned him with glory and honor." Everybody is created by God and God does not make junk. There are no worthless people. There are people who do worthless

**things**. There are people who do wrong things but they are all of value to God. **Even the most unlovable person is loved by God.**

**2. Because Jesus died for everybody.** The Bible tells us that "God paid a ransom to save you. He paid for you with the precious life blood of Christ." I may not think much about somebody, but God does. **In fact, He says they are worth dying for.** The cross shows how much people matter to God.

**3. Because it shows I know God.** The Bible says that God is love and if I know God then I am going to fill my life with love. **1 John 4:8 says,** "If a person isn't loving and kind, it shows that he doesn't know God, for God is love." **Love always treats people with respect.** If you look at the life of Jesus Christ, He treated even His enemies with respect, even those who wanted to kill Him. **He was not rude to them. He was not demeaning to them.** But He treated even the people who were trying to put Him to death with respect.

**After spending years studying the Bible, I am convinced that the number one test of my faith is my relationships.** It is not what you believe or what you say you believe that matters as much as how that belief comes out in your behavior. **The number one test of my faith is my relationships. Matthew 25 says one of the things we will be judged on at the judgment is how we treated other people.** Why? Because it comes under "works."

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians, "Love is not rude." **What is rudeness?** We see it all around us but what really is it? **The bottom line is, rudeness is simply disrespect.**

**4. Because I will get back whatever I give out.** It is the law of the harvest. **The reciprocal rule. Whatever goes around comes around. Whatever you want in life, the Bible has set it up this way, you give out and you will get back.** If you want to be respected, it is simple -- treat other people with respect. **If you want to be treated and valued**

with dignity, treat other people with value and dignity. If you want people to smile at you, you smile at them. Whatever you give out, you are going to get back.

In a world that is full of rudeness and disrespect, how can I show respect to others in a practical way?

1. When I speak to other people I need to be tactful, not just truthful. The primary way we show respect is with our words. Proverbs 15:4 says, "Kind words bring life but cruel words crush your spirit." The way you say something determines how well it is going to be received. You can say the same thing in different ways and it will be accepted or rejected. Even inflection can change the meaning of a word.

2. When I am being served by people, I need to be understanding not demanding. One of the greatest tests of your character is how you treat people when they serve you. Waitress, waiters, clerks, employees, secretaries, people who work for you, husband, wife, children. When people are doing something for you, are you understanding or are you demanding?

3. When you disagree with people, be gentle not judgmental. As a believer in our society, there are a lot of things I disagree with and I am sure there are for you too. But how am I supposed to react to these people?

4. When people are rude to you, respond politely. This is really hard, because the flesh wants to rise up inside of you. Do not retaliate by being rude back. That only adds fuel to the fire. It just makes things worse. The Bible says, "Don't repay evil for evil but overcome evil with good."

Let me close this segment with this poem:

You are who you are for a reason  
You are part of an intricate plan  
You are a precious, perfect unique design  
Called God's special woman or man.

You look like you look for a reason  
Our God made no mistake  
He knit you together within the womb  
You're just what He intended to make

The parents you had are the ones that He chose  
No matter how you may feel  
You were custom designed with that plan in mind  
They bear the master's seal.

The trauma you faced wasn't easy  
And God wept that it hurt you so  
But it was allowed to shape your hearts  
So that into His likeness you'd grow

You are who you are for a reason  
You've been formed by the Master's rod  
You are who you are, beloved.  
Because there is a God.