

## CCC LOVE LETS IT GO Part 5

### 40 Days of Love

Welcome to message number five in our 40 Days of Love Campaign. I wanted to let you know something I notice this morning as I walked around and sat up here observing... you all look more loving than you did about a month ago or so ago. You really do and I think that is because everybody is working on becoming a world class lover, a great lover. We've established that fact in the earlier messages from God's word, the bible that life is all about learning to love. We've been looking at Love in some of our small groups that meet during the week and in our daily reading of the booklets you're given after the service and here Sundays during the 9 and 10:30 services we've been looking at Love. I want so much for Calvary to

become a church of great lovers. And to become great lovers we have to choose to become that, love is a choice not something that just happens like falling into a ditch... I see it happening right before my eyes and that's great because we were only 1/2 there to the 40 days of love... Just think what we can become by the end of the 40 Days of Love. Today I want us to look at one of the ways that God builds His love in us and it is, he tests it. He tests it by putting you around unlovely people, it's easy for to show God's love to loveable people. It's easy to love loving people. But for God to teach you real love he's going to put you around unlovely people and put you to the test. Is the very fabric of Bill Raley becoming like God, who is love, when I am in tuff situations with tuff people does His love flowing from me or does the old nature of Bill take over. Now there are four types of people I want to look at this morning that are

in your life. There are **Difficult** people, there are **Demanding** people, there are **Disappointing** people and there are **Destructive** people. We all have these four types of people in and around our life and you will throughout your life here on earth. God says, to each and every person who has asked Christ to come into their life to become their Lord, to become their Saviour, to be the manager of their life. To each of these people God says I want you to learn to love these people the way I want you to do it...

And guess what way is that... I want what's best for them.

God's word, the bible 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.*" 1 Cor. 13:5

When you understand these four things *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.*

When you understand these four things and you begin working them into your life: you are on the way to receiving your Degree in Christ-like-ness. Your on course to receive your Doctrine of Love. So how do we deal in love with these four types of people that we all have in our life. The **Difficult** people, the **Demanding** people, the **Disappointing** people and the **Destructive** people. That's what were going to look at now:

The first type of person we want to look to learn to deal with in life, and learn to love in life, are Difficult people.

Have you noticed there are a lot of them? They're all over the place. Have you noticed that the world tends to be becoming ruder, not more civil? People are becoming increasingly ruder? You can find rudeness everywhere, at school, at work, at home, in restaurants, in stores, on the freeway, all around you. People think this is just how we

survive and how life is... and the truth is they couldn't be any farther from the truth.

I'd like to do a little survey this morning and I would like to ask you to participate in it with me right now, would you do that for me. Here is what I want you to do. If I were to ask you, "What form of rudeness irritates you the most," what would answer? Take a moment and you think about that for a minute, before you answer? Okay got it? Now that you have it I want you for the next 10 seconds share it with your neighbor. Just tell them what it is... I'm going to give you my top five. But before I give you my list I want you to turn to somebody and say, "One thing that really bugs me is \_\_\_\_\_" and don't say, "It's this Pastors up here making me talk to a total stranger." You can't use that one. But turn to somebody and say, "One of the things that I find rude is \_\_\_\_\_" Talk to

somebody next to you. Don't give them your whole list. Just one thing!

Okay let me give you my list. These are the top ten rude acts that bug me:

6. People who honk their horn in traffic jams that are going no where. The guy's honking, nobody's moving. I think what a waste of time and energy.
5. People who light their cigarette soon as they walk out the door of the church and can't wait till they get over in the smoke area.
4. People who leave church during my message.
3. Same as number 4.
2. Same as number 3.
1. People who cheat at the ten-item grocery express line. I counted – get out of the line, buddy! Take a hike!

God's word the bible tells us that, "*Love is not rude.*" So therefore, **I must be tactful, not just truthful.** Love is tactful. In other words you don't return their rudeness with rudeness. You actually overcome evil with good, God's word, the bible tells us.

One of the ways that you can be tactful is simply by listening to them first. Now follow me here don't turn me off. They may have a point. If you listen to people sympathetically and then you respond tactfully, that is the loving response to use with a difficult person. You listen lovingly then you respond lovingly.

This thing about listening really goes with tact because the number one form of rudeness in our society today – I'm guilty of it – you are too. Interrupting people. Not listening to people. It is rude to not listen. It is rude to not let somebody finish their sentence. We all do this at times.

The Bible says in Proverbs 18:13 "*Answering before listening is both stupid and rude.* Everybody does this. We are rude because we jump to conclusions. We assume we know what other people think. But we don't. Tact is listening. Love listens. And then love responds tactfully not just truthfully. And not interrupting.

*"Stop being bitter and angry and mad at each other, don't yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude.*

[Circle "ever be rude."] *Instead, be kind and merciful and forgiving. Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.*" Love listens and love is tactful.

Proverbs 16:21 "*A wise, mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is.*" Circle "pleasant" and circle "persuasive" and draw a line between them. The more pleasant you are, the more persuasive you are. You might

write down under this verse “**I’m never persuasive when I’m abrasive.**” When I’m abrasive with my wife, when I’m abrasive with my kids, when I’m abrasive with clerks, when I’m abrasive with anybody... I’m never persuasive. WHY? Because, “*Love is not rude.*” So therefore, I must be tactful, not just truthful to show God’s love in me.

The second kind of group you’re going to have to deal with in your life here on earth is Demanding people. These are the people who always want their way. They’ve always got a right way and a wrong way to do it and your way is always the wrong way. You can never quite please these people. The demanding people have their standards and if you don’t meet their standards they’re going to let you know about it. So how do you respond in love to demanding people? The Bible says “*Love does not demand its own way*” so therefore,

### **I must be understanding, not demanding.**

Jesus is the best example of this. Philippians 2. “*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.*” Yes, Jesus was God, and yes He could do anything He wanted to do whenever He wanted to do it, but he was understanding, and not demanding. Circle “*did not demand and cling to his rights.*”

One of the greatest tests of your character is how you treat the people who serve you, the waiters, the waitresses, the flight attendants, the people at fast food places, the mail person who delivers your mail, secretaries, employees. How do you treat the people who help you out? Do you even notice them? They do their job and nobody’s even

looking at them. Nobody's paying attention to them.

Nobody's considering their feelings. Nobody's

sympathetic of what they're going through. Nobody

respects them.

When we sometimes look at people we go, WOW, 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 real 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 what they have done with their

life. We always look at how far they've got to go. We

don't look at how far they've come. There are all kinds of

battles and burdens that people carry that you and I don't

know about. Love is understanding not demanding.

Does that mean I'm just supposed to let them run over me,

somebody who is a demanding person? Do I just let them

push me around? Do I just always cave in and say

whatever you want. No, that's not what God is calling you

to do. Here's the key: Be tender without surrender. You

don't let people just push you around. Jesus never caved in

to manipulators. The religious leaders, the Pharisees, they

always tried to manipulate Jesus. They were extremely

demanding. They were very legalistic. They had all kinds

of demands that they themselves couldn't even keep. Jesus

would not let other demanding people push him into a

corner. Be tender without surrender. That's what you call

love in action.

There's a third group that we have to deal with. That is

Disappointing people. You're going to be disappointed in

life. In fact, everybody in your life is going to disappoint

you. Your friends are going to disappoint you, your family, your parents, your brothers, your sisters. They're going to disappoint you. Your husband or your wife is going to disappoint you. I'm going to disappoint you as your pastor. Why, because nobody's perfect. So how do you deal with disappointing people? How does love respond when we're disappointed by people? The third thing the Bible says is "*Love is not irritable.*" So therefore, **I must be gentle not judgmental.**

Let's see what the scriptures have to say about how we can be gentle and not judgmental. Galatians 6:1 says "*Brothers and sisters, if someone in your group does something wrong you who are spiritual should go to that person and gently help make him right again. But be careful, because you might be tempted to sin too.*" You might want to circle the word "gently." I love the fact that

it says gently. How do you have tough conversations with people in a gentle way? How do you confront people you love when you see they're doing something they shouldn't be doing. The Bible tells us you've got to do it gently, not harshly, not in a rude or mean way, but to do it with gentleness and respect.

Here's a little equation for you: **Right + Rude = Wrong.**

It doesn't matter how right you are. If you're rude about it nobody's going to care what you have to say anyway. The person is immediately going to get defensive. So you do it in a gentle and a loving way. Not in a harsh or a cruel way. Colossians 3:13. The Bible says "*Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.* [Notice it says whatever grievances. You can't be selective about this. Forgive whatever grievances you have against one another] *and forgive as the Lord forgave*

*you.*” Then in Romans 14:12, the Bible says this *“Each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore, let’s stop passing judgment on each other.”*

It’s important to understand the difference between using your judgment and being judgmental. I’ve talked to people who let all kinds of things go on in relationships and say, “I don’t want to be judgmental towards them.” So instead they just become victims, enablers of the person. There’s a difference between using your judgment and being judgmental. You’ve got to use your judgment so you can see when something’s going wrong. You’ve got to be able to decide between wrong and right. To be able to know what the truth is, truth is not judgmental. It’s only judgmental when you beat somebody over the head with it when it becomes judgmental. The Bible says you’ve got to use your judgment. You’ve got to be smart about things.

But you don’t have to be judgmental with the person. The Bible says this in Proverbs 15:4 *“Gentle words bring life and health. A deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”* I love the way it says this in the Message paraphrase. It says *“Kind words heal and help. But cutting words wound and maim.”*

So we always have a choice when we need to speak to somebody, especially with our kids. Have you found how cutting words can just wound and maim a child? You can hurt them for years. But the Bible says that kind words are words that will heal and help. So when your kids mess up, you don’t have to get on their case and tell them whatever you think they are at the moment. But give them a vision of how things could be like if they did the right thing. Speak words of life and health and hope into your children. Not words of judgment and harshness. But be gentle. It’s

the same way in our marriages. How many marriage problems could be strengthened if we had just waited a beat and used words that were gentle and kind and not harsh or vindictive? Do you really want to know the truth today... There are really so few things that are really worth fighting about. (REPEAT) Think about it... Even the things that we think are worth fighting about; most of them aren't worth fighting about either. Why, because there temporal. They're going to pass. We ought to learn to cut each other some slack and be kind and gentle in our relationships.

The fourth aspect has to do with dealing with Destructive people, and this is the hardest one of all. How do you love people who intentionally hurt you? Those people who are mean. Whose people who are hurting and they want you to hurt also, they from their hurt have

become hateful. What do you do with those people? Who are manipulative? When people hurt us we have two natural tendencies. Remember it and retaliate against it.

That's our natural tendencies:

**First we remember it.** We stockpile it in our mind. We put it back in the database and say, I'm never forgetting that one. I'm never letting them off the hook. I'm going to watch them from now on. We remember it. We rehearse it over and over and over. That's our natural tendencies when people hurt us:

**The second thing we do is we retaliate.** We want to get even. But that's not what the Bible says for us to do. That's not what God wants His children to do, those who have asked Jesus Christ into their lives to be the manager, the director of their lives, those who desire to follow Jesus. That's not what he has called you to do. See God's Love

takes a step up, a step above the situation. The Bible says “*Love keeps no record of wrongs.*” WOW, what does that mean? How do I respond to people who have hurt me in my life? How do I handle all of those wounds, those pains, those hurts that I’ve stockpiled back there in my memory? How do I handle them? Here’s what you do.

*LOVE KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS.* So therefore You **don’t repeat it, you delete it.** Wipe it out of the memory bank. You let it go. Forgive it and get on with your life. Don’t repeat it. You maybe asking, What do I mean by that? Typically when we get hurt we repeat it three ways. First, we repeat it emotionally in our minds. Secondly, we repeat it relationally as a weapon or a score card against the person. And third, we repeat it practically and verbally in telling other people. We just keep it stirred up all the time And all three of those are destructive,

damaging, and self-defeating for your life. You’re only hurting yourself by repeating it in your mind, by repeating it over and over in conversations and using it as a wedge and by repeating it to other people. Don’t repeat it. Delete it. “*Love keeps no record of wrongs.*”

Let me show you three verses about these three things.

First you don’t rehearse it over in your mind. Leviticus 19:17 “*Do not bear a grudge against others. But settle your differences with them so you will not commit a sin because of them.*” How is that possible? How do I commit a sin because of them if I keep a grudge?

Psychology study after psychology study has proven that whatever you rehearse you begin to resemble. Uh-oh! Whatever you think about most that’s what you move towards. UH-oh! If all you think about is how much you’ve been hurt in the past, you’re moving which way, to

the past. If you focus on the future, you move toward the future. If you focus on the promises of God, you move toward the promises of God. If you focus on potential, you move toward the potential. But if you focus on your pain, you're moving toward your pain. And whatever you rehearse you will eventually begin to resemble. I will never be like my father! I will never be like my mother! I will never... Guess what? The very fact that you're focused on it means that's what you're moving toward. How does God expect me to love the destructive people who've hurt me? This I do know... He doesn't expect you to ignore it. He doesn't expect you to pretend it doesn't exist. He's not asking you to gloss over it or deny it or repress it, or fake it or make excuses for the people who've hurt you in your life. No. He wants you to face it. Why, because you can't forgive it until you face it. And you'll

never be free until you forgive and you'll never forgive until you face it.

Let me take this one a little bit deeper. How you relate to your parents affects every other single relationship in your life whether you realize it or not. We pull relationship patterns into existing relationships. We often carry a lot of emotional relational baggage into our friendships, into our marriages and things like that. That affects every other relationship including our relationship to God.

The truth is some of you were hurt as kids. Maybe even by your parents. You here today and you have some unfinished business. If you're going to become the godly loving woman, the godly loving man that God wants you to be, that you want to be, that I want you to be – that's the whole reason we're doing 40 Days of Love is so you can become a more loving, love filled person – you're going to

have to deal with these past issues now. You're going to have to do some business. Because the truth is you carried a bunch forward and you're venting on your husband or you're venting on your wife or venting on your kids and they're not even at fault. They're not even the ones who caused the pain. If you're still angry at a parent or for that matter anybody you're still allowing them to control you. Don't.

As your friend, as your pastor I'm saying don't. Don't allow that any more. You've got to deal with the anger. You've got to face it before you can forgive it. And as I said stop blaming and stop running.

Proverbs 19:11 says this *"When someone wrongs you it is a great virtue to ignore it."* Just ignore it. Let it go. But you can't ignore it until first you face it and forgive it. Then you can ignore it. And you let it go. Love lets it go.

Job 18:4 says *"You are only hurting yourself with your anger."* 1st Corinthians 13:5 *"Love doesn't keep a record of wrongs."* That means if you're going to be loving "Do you remember when you did this... do you remember when you did that..." *"Love does not keep a record of wrongs."*

I don't know who you need to forgive but I do know today's the day. As we close I want you to think of the people who've hurt you in your life and I want you to let them off the hook. Love lets it go. Love forgives. Because they deserve it? No. But you don't deserve being forgiven either by God, but He has forgiven you, because it's the right thing to do and it's the only way to be free.

**Prayer:**

Father I don't know the hurts that people are going through here today but I know that you know every one of them and you want them to be freed from it. Now I am going to

ask you to pray with me whisper this prayer. "God, I'm tired of the pain. I'm tired of being stuck in the prison of the past. Father, I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired. I'm tired of wasting emotional energy on the people who've hurt me. Lord, I need that energy for the future, for today. Today, I'm asking you to do two things. Jesus Christ, fill me with the Spirit of forgiveness. Fill me with the Spirit of love. Take over every area of my life. I invite you into every crevice and corner of my heart. I ask you to forgive all my sins, all the ways I've hurt other people when I was demanding not understanding. When I was judgmental not gentle. When I was repeating the sins instead of deleting the sins. Forgive me for all of that. I want to let go of the people who have hurt me in my life. I want to do what's right. I want you to fill my life with love. I want to be able to love others and not be stuck. So

today, dear Jesus Christ, I'm in faith letting them go. I'm letting that person go. If it takes me a thousand times to do this until the pain goes away, I'm going to keep remembering, and every time they bring it up I'm going to remember to say I'm letting them go. I'm letting them off the hook. I've forgiven them. Help me to be tactful not just truthful. Help me to be gentle not judgmental. Help me to be understanding not demanding. When people hurt me help me to not repeat it but to delete it. To be tender without surrender to the people who I need to set boundaries with in my life. Jesus Christ, I want to become a loving person. I want to move to the higher levels of love. I ask your help and your grace. In your name I pray. Amen