

Love is Not Rude

The Characteristics of Love

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Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 13:1-4

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Happy Mother's Day. It's right for us to take a day and especially thank the Lord for our own mothers and for the many godly women at our church. We really are extremely blessed by the hundreds and hundreds of women who are allowing Jesus Christ to mold them into his image so we're hoping that this is going to be an especially good day for you.

Dustin mentioned in his prayer some of those for whom this day might be difficult and I want you to know that we're trying to be sensitive to you as well. That's one of the reasons that I as a pastor am so thankful for the ministry of the Holy Spirit of God. I couldn't possibly think about all of this situations or try to teach the Scripture from all of those perspectives but what gives me great comfort is that the Holy Spirit of God knows exactly what's going on in your life right now and knows exactly those who will be among us today for whom Mother's Day is especially difficult. Our hope and prayer is that he's going to minister to you in special ways and meet every need that exists here but for many of us, this is a day of rejoicing and we want to be sure that we give honor to whom honor is due.

Maybe some wisdom from my special needs son, Andrew, will help put balance on all of this. I was talking with Andrew this week, we were playing electronic Battleship. That's one of the things that he and I really love to do together and so many times, some of our deepest conversations take place when we're playing electronic Battleship and he explained to me that one of the teachers in his school was about to adopt a baby. As I heard him talk about that, it sounded like he was under the impression, because he's adopted, that he's under the impression that, "Well, all children are adopted." So I wanted to try to get into that gently so I just said to him, "Son, are you sure that she's adopting a baby?" He thought about that for a minute and he said, "Well, no. I think you're right. She's just having him delivered, she said." So, lest we make this whole motherhood thing more than it is, let's face it ladies, it's like ordering a pizza or getting something off of Amazon. You just have him delivered. Had it delivered.

Have you seen examples on the internet where someone was trying to follow a recipe they saw on Pinterest or some other website but their version didn't come out quite like the picture? What's humorous is our culture has adopted the phrase "nailed it" to describe

such episodes when that's really the opposite of what occurred. For example, there are these delightful rubber ducky cupcakes. Isn't that marvelous? If you're going to have a duck themed party for your child, mom, that would be great. Yup, nailed it. Your child is going to be in therapy for years. Or a Despicable Me cake. How hard would it be to make that? Nailed it. She nailed it alright. I have no idea how it got two eyes. Nailed it. Or these little bunny biscuits. Aren't those cute? And what's nice about that, ladies, it even has a little explanation: you get some forceps, you give it a little squeeze and that's what created those delightful little bunny ears. Yup. Or little devils, whatever. Nailed it. Nailed it right there. By the way, I keep saying that these are ladies doing this, we don't actually know that, do we? These may be pictures of men. Men on Pinterest, please tell me that never happens. Or if you have a runner in your family, you might want to bake up a nice runner cookie just to demonstrate how fast your runner is how fit and trim he's looking now that he's running. Yeah. Nailed it. Yup, that'll help. Or here you go, this will probably make you want to have second breakfast right here. Doesn't that look delicious? I mean, some great colored pancakes. Or maybe you need some Maalox. Nailed it right there. Here's one more: a piece of watermelon cake. How hard would that be to make? It just says: summer. Ladies, I bet you could go home right now and whip one of those up before lunchtime unless it came out like this. You wouldn't eat watermelon the rest of the summer.

Here's the principle, there is a point to all of this and by the way, I hope I have not brought up some bad memories from some of your culinary delights. We have a counseling center here to help you. Here's the principle: sometimes we think we can nail something or we think we are nailing something when the truth of the matter is that our version falls far short of the standard. And that's not just true of our baking prowess or lack thereof, it's also true of characteristics in the Christian life where we have convinced ourselves that we are on the right track in a particular area but then we hold ourselves up to the light of the word of God or the person of Jesus Christ and we're helped if we'll let ourselves be because we see how much further we still have to go and hopefully then, we run to the cross for direction and run to the cross for strength.

With that in mind, let me invite you to open your Bible this morning to 1 Corinthians 13. That's on page 137 of the back section of the Bible under the chair in front of you.

This dynamic that we're describing, thinking we nailed it when we didn't, that can be true of God's children in hundreds of ways but I wonder if one where it's especially the case is the issue of biblical love? Where I convince myself that I'm being loving but from the perspective of heaven God would say, "Yeah, you nailed it," and I'm not sure God uses sarcasm but he would use whatever terminology and words was necessary in order to help us understand what's really going on, that we have long, long way to go. That's why the word of God can be so helpful to us if we'll let it be. If we approach the Scripture with a sincere desire to grow, do you? And if we actually come to the church house with a hunger and thirst for righteousness and with a passion about getting to a better place, we can actually be helped by the convicting and correcting power of the word. Right?

Then, over time, we can actually become more like the pattern, more like the standard, more like the goal, more like what God's word would have us become. More like the person of Jesus Christ because just like with those Pinterest pics, the other side of that discussion is how amazing some people are because they can look at one of those pictures and then they can make something and it actually matches. My wife and my daughters are like that and I just find that amazing. "How did you do that from a picture?" Well, in Christ, through the truth of the word and the power of the Holy Spirit, if we acknowledge where we fall short and repent and allow God to help us go the other direction, over time, we can actually make corrections.

That's where this study that we're doing right now on the characteristics of love fits into the discussion. 1 Corinthians 13 gives us the most complete explanation of what love is like as anywhere else in the word of God. If our overall theme as a church this year is "Loving Our Neighbors," it's crucial we're all operating off the same definition and it's important that we're all working hard at nailing the pattern as individuals and as a church family.

With that in mind, please follow along as I read from 1 Corinthians 13, beginning in verse 1, "If I speak with the tongues of men," so we're talking here in the context of spiritual gifts, that's what chapters 12-14 are all about so remember this discussion of love is imbedded in a discussion about spiritual gifts.

"1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

Here's the pattern,

"4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."

We're talking this morning about the characteristics of love and specifically how love does not act unbecomingly. Now, if you're following along carefully you might say, "Now wait a minute, you skipped the phrases love does not brag and is not arrogant. Last week Pastor Aucoin spoke about how love is kind and if you're going to talk about love does not act unbecomingly this morning, you're skipping something. You've skipped the phrase love does not brag and is not arrogant." The rest of our staff and our deacons decided I wasn't qualified to speak on that one. That's a little joke but here's what's happening: frequently on Sunday mornings whoever is speaking at Faith East is also projected live at 9:30 and 11:00 over to Faith West but sometimes we mix that up where somebody else is speaking live at Faith West while we're doing what we're doing over here. Now we have about a year under our belts of being a multi-site – one church in two locations – and that cluster of ministries that have begun over there are doing incredibly well. In fact just last Sunday night, I made the point as we were having so many people be baptized and join our church last Sunday night, I pointed out that a number of them were from Faith West and I know many of you are sacrificially giving or serving over there in order to make all that happen and God is blessing those efforts for sure. But now we've been doing it about a year and around here we believe in experimenting, we believe in tweaking, we believe in progressive sanctification at an institutional level so we're trying always to improve everything that we do. What that means is, if you don't like something around here, sit tight, we'll probably eventually change it. The downside, by the way, is if you really do like something, don't get too attached to it, we'll probably change that too.

Back to what I'm talking about right now, I'm very thankful for the deep bench we have on our pastoral staff. We do and that was done on purpose. I think that's very healthy, very necessary. So, we've been looking for an occasion where one pastor would prepare a message and give it here at Faith East live while on the same Sunday, another part of our pastoral staff would prepare a message, a different one, and give it live at Faith West and then the following Sunday, we would switch places and so whatever was done at Faith West would be done here and vice versa. Well, in order to do that well, you have to find a place in the Bible where it really doesn't matter the order in which the phrases are studied. In other words, they don't really appear sequentially in the Scripture; they can be switched around without affecting their meaning. This passage is one of those places so Pastor Green is speaking at Faith West right now on the phrases that I skipped and then next Sunday, Lord willing, he and I are going to switch places and then we're going to evaluate how we like that. I'm not saying we're going to do that all the time, that's not the point, but it's nice to know how many workable tools you have in your ministry toolbox and who knows what the Lord has for us on whether he has other sites around our town in our future so we're just trying to figure out the best way to serve our church family with the resources that we have on our team.

Let's hone in now on this phrase: love does not act unbecomingly. I'd like to keep our outline relatively simple. Let's talk about the meaning of this particular characteristic of love and I probably ought to warn you in advance: we're going to have to work hard on this one; you're going to have to put your thinking cap on. So, did you come to the church house ready to work at it? Don't just be spending the rest of your time thinking, "Now,

how do you make those rubber ducky cupcakes?” Okay, get those out of your head now. So, the meaning of this particular characteristic of love and then we want to put it in its historical setting, it's context so some of the reasons that was important to the Corinthian church and there will be some take-aways for us even in that because we can be like the Corinthians. Thirdly, some of the many ways these truths additionally can apply to us as well.

Let's start: what's the meaning of this particular characteristic of love? Like many of the terms that are used in this particular section, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, this particular one is fairly rare in the Bible. It's the word *aschemoneo* and the root word means “shameful.” You need to remember that or “unpresentable” or “indecent.” So, love is not unbecoming. Love is not rude in some versions. The root word is “shameful, unpresentable, indecent.” Now, it's often helpful when you're studying something from the Bible to ask this question: did this same writer use this same or a related word in this same book? Because if so, that might give some insight into what's being emphasized and in this case, the answer is yes. Again, we have to put our thinking caps on. Don't let me lose you but put your thinking cap on and when we're done here in a few minutes, you will have a much better understanding of what did Paul really mean when he said that love is not rude or love does not act unbecomingly. What does that really mean and how does that impact the way that I would live?

You see, Paul had just used a related word a few verses earlier. You say, “Well, where?” In chapter 12:23 and remember I said as I was reading through the text and we've said it a couple of times in this series, this entire description of love, I know we hear it at weddings and all the rest but this description in 1 Corinthians 13 is in a larger context: chapters 12, 13 and 14 about spiritual gifts. You probably noticed that even as we were reading in chapter 12. Now Paul has been talking about the fact that the church is like a body with many parts and we shouldn't just, he says, honor those who have the showy gifts, the honorable gifts and not give attention and focus and have appreciation for those whose gifts are more behind-the-scenes. Well, pick it up and look for the same word *aschemoneo*, indecent, in 1 Corinthians 12:20, “But now,” Paul says, “there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; or again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members,” there it is, “our less presentable members become much more presentable.” So, lock on, I realize you say, “What?” and what's underlined here, I had an underline for a different reason. The word *aschemoneo* is actually, the phrase in that verse, “our less presentable members become more presentable.”

You might say, “What does this mean? You're losing me totally.” Here's what it means: when you came to the church house today, there were certain parts of your body that you wanted to be sure to have covered because otherwise it would have been indecent, it would have been shameful, it would have been unpresentable. Not that those parts of the body are shameful in and of themselves if they're exposed in the proper setting but it would have been shameful, it would have been unpresentable, it would have been

indecent to not honor those parts of your body by covering them well. That's the context here.

Then Paul goes on and makes an entirely different point about that as it relates to the issue of spiritual gifts in chapter 12 but now in chapter 13, when he's talking about love, he raises the exact same concept. He uses the exact same word and he says "love is not aschemoneo." Biblical love is not indecent; it's not shameful; it's not rude; it's not boorish. It doesn't act unbecomingly. So, the overall point is being rude, unbecoming, out of place. And you understand it has nothing to do with the way that you dress but it's using the picture of how we dress as a means to describe how we act in being rude, unbecoming, out of place. Commentator William Barclay translated this: "Love does not behave gracelessly." John MacArthur said this: "The principle here has to do with poor manners, with acting rudely. It does not care enough for those it is around to act becomingly or politely. It cares nothing for their feelings or their sensitivities. The loveless person is careless, overbearing and often crude." Love is not that. Love does not act unbecomingly. Love is not rude.

Let's think about it from the positive perspective for a moment. What does this element of love look like? You may remember this example from the Old Testament: it's a sad story of Noah after the flood. Scripture tells us that he became drunk and he was unclothed in his tent and his younger son, Ham, who was a very profane man who was also the father of Canaan, saw his father in that condition. He had to decide what he was going to do: was he going to be loving to his father or was he going to act unbecomingly. Do you remember what Ham did? He went and found his two brothers and told them probably to exploit and perhaps mock the condition of his father. Here's what happens in Genesis 9:23, "But Shem and Japheth," that would have been Ham's brothers, "Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him." His youngest son, in trying to exploit his condition, was acting in a way that was indecent, was acting a way that was boorish, was acting in a way that was rude. And his two brothers, Shem and Japheth, chose to love their father. You see, love is not that. Love does not act unbecomingly.

We won't take the time, although it is very instructive, to read what Noah next says to his sons, both positively and negatively. You might want to do that after you're letting your ducky cupcakes digest later on today that your wife perfectly made from Pinterest. But when you're done with all that, if you read Genesis 9, you're going to find some very interesting comments from Noah about how wise his two loving sons behaved and how wicked his younger son, Ham, was. And it's interesting, as I said, Ham became the father of the Canaanite civilization, known as people who were indecent and rude.

I hope already, you're starting to ask yourself the question: are there ways that my love is not nailing it biblically? Are there ways that my love is not nailing it biblically because I'm rude in some ways? Or I'm acting in a way that is unbecoming in some setting? You also may be on a different wavelength in your mind, you're maybe thinking about your

mom and if she was a godly woman, how loving she was in part by the way she was the polar opposite of this negative element we're studying this morning? Her love was gracious. She did the right thing in the right way at the right time. It was appropriate for the setting; it was always decent.

Before we go further on that trail, let's clarify this principle by thinking about some of the reasons this was important to the Corinthian church. As I said, every church has vestiges of the Corinthian church in it so we can be thinking about this not just from an historical perspective but also from where we are. John MacArthur said: "The Corinthian Christians were models of unbecoming behavior. Acting unseemly was almost their trademark. Nearly everything they did was rude and unloving." Wouldn't you hate it if the Spirit of God would say that about us? Wouldn't you hate it if our community concluded that about us? "Well, Faith, they're the models of unbecoming behavior. Acting unseemly is their trademark. Nearly everything they do is rude. Nearly everything they do is unloving." Please tell me when you hear a quote like that you say, "Oh, my, my, my, my, could that be true of me or us in any particular way?"

How were the Corinthians so rude? They were rude in their divisiveness, one of the major issues going on in this church. "I exhort you," Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you." That's rude. "Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I of Apollos,' and 'I of Cephas,' and 'I of Christ.'" They're rude by comparing themselves and their teachers that they preferred. Then why was it so important that they aligned themselves with various teachers? "I am of Paul, I am of Cephas," etc. why were they doing that? The answer is, "Because I'm better than you because my favorite teacher is better than yours." Here's what we need to see that bringing that kind of pride into the church is as disgraceful and outrageous and indecent as coming without your clothes on. And that lack of love invariably divides a church family.

Pastor Aucoin made a very important point about this whole issue of being divisive in the church and "I'm of this person," or "I'm of that person." He said why not instead just ask the other person how or why that particular teacher was so helpful to them spiritually in an attempt to celebrate with them and learn from them instead of having to one-up the conversation with the person that you think is better. You see, what he suggested last week, that would be words that are timely. They would be becoming of the moment. Those would be words that are fitting, loving and therefore contributing to the body and unity in the body instead of being so rude.

They were also rude in their acceptance of immorality. 1 Corinthians 5 reveals the incredible situation of the man in their church who was living with his father's wife. By the way, you understand that incestuous man would have been convinced in his mind that he was being loving. The principle is: just because you think you're being loving doesn't mean you are. You might say, "Well, is that what 1 Corinthians 5 was really about?" No,

the real scandal was not that the wicked fornication of the incestuous man. What was the real scandal if you know your Bible? The real scandal was that the Corinthian church was not doing anything about it. That's rude. You say, "How so?" Because the decent thing, the right thing, would have been to confront that man and deal with that sin and if necessary, if he would not repent, to remove that person from the church. Again, the insidious thing is: had you gone to the Corinthian church, they undoubtedly would have said, "Oh, we're a very loving church. We don't judge people around here. We just live and let live." And if you know your Bible, you know that Paul had very stern words for them and their failure to deal with this man before it had a negative impact spiritually on the entire church. The principle is: what some people think is love is actually unbecoming. Some people can say, "Well, I'm loving and I'm contributing to a loving atmosphere in the church," when the fact of the matter is, their love is indecent. Their love is rude. It is not what is fitting for the moment.

I was contacted by a church once where there were several men who would go around on Sunday mornings hugging all the women. Some of the women in the church were becoming increasingly uncomfortable with that practice because the men were hugging them tightly from the front and patting them all over their backs and all the rest. The women wanted to know, "Is this biblical love?" Their question was interesting: is biblical love supposed to make me feel uncomfortable? And what's the answer? Absolutely not. Again, the insidious thing was: if you had asked those men, they would have said, "We're a loving church," demonstrating the deceptiveness of our hearts. They probably even believed that. Listen, sometimes when a person says "I love you," what they really mean is "I love me and I want you." And there is a world of difference in those concepts. Love does not act unbecomingly, indecently, shamefully. That's not love, that's lust. And many times it's a form of control, "I'm going to love you by my definition, not by yours and not by God's."

They were rude. They were rude in the way that they took one another to court. Their selfishness was on full display just as inappropriately as coming to church without your clothes. It was rude; it was unbecoming; it detracted terribly from the beauty of Christ.

They were rude in the way they functioned sexually in marriage. Paul has an extended discussion of sexual fidelity within the boundaries of monogamous marriage. In chapter 7 and how married people in that church were trying to manipulate their spouses with sex and tried to hurt their spouse with sex. The way they were treating one another was rude. It was unloving.

They were rude in their selfish expressions of Christian liberty. Another major section in this book, chapters 8-10, are all about Christian liberty where persons in the church were flaunting their freedoms in front of weaker brethren with no apparent concern for how that might affect somebody else spiritually. It's rude. It's rude not to care about the spiritual health and vitality of another brother or sister in Christ.

They were even rude at the Lord's table. I mean, isn't it amazing to think about that possibility. How can we be unloving at the ordinance designed to celebrate the amazing

love of our Savior? The Corinthians found a way to do it. Paul talks about it in 1 Corinthians 11, “Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing?” There is the key rudeness. “What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.” You realize that in the early church they called that even “the love feast,” and so you have this love feast in the early church where wealthy people are coming in with this entire array of sumptuous food and not sharing with those who are less fortunate. It's just plain rude. Rude. It was the unlove feast. It was the unlove feast in the church.

They were rude in their expression of spiritual gifts. The Corinthians loved and coveted the showy gifts and apparently they didn't care much about how the expression of their gifts impacted anybody else. Paul is trying to help them understand that it's rude. “You're unloving when you do that.” That's what he meant when he said, “Look, if I don't know the meaning of the language, I'll be to the one who speaks a barbarian.” What value is it if even during the time when tongues were operable in the church if there is no interpreter present, why do I want to do it? I'm going to be like a barbarian. The other person isn't going to benefit. “The one who speaks will be a barbarian to me, so also you since you are zealous of spiritual gifts. Seek to abound for the edification, the building up of the church.” Here's the point: it's possible to be very gifted and very unloving at the same time. So it didn't matter to them if somebody else understood God and his word better because of how they were expressing their gifts, they wanted the power and the praise that came with the expression.

I'll tell you, that ought to get all of our attention. You realize that if you know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the Bible says that you have been entrusted with at least one spiritual gift. I hope you've identified it and I hope you've received training to be equipped and I hope you're using it but wouldn't it be a terrible thing for us to exercise a gift from God in a way that was unloving and rude? You realize people could do that with their knowledge of the Scripture where they actually bully other people with the Bible. Keep in mind: Satan quoted Bible verses. And this is a theme that runs through this entire discussion because our hearts are so easily deceived, we can be absolutely convinced we're being loving when the fact of the matter is, we're being rude.

I've kind of been on the negative side of this discussion because the Corinthians had a lot of negativity going on but thankfully there are a lot of positive examples and before I get into some of the ones that flow out of this text, maybe you saw this one this week which I thought was a marvelous and generally I don't talk about love and the NBA or love and professional athletes. But you may have seen Kevin Durant who was named the MVP of the NBA this week and the speech he gave was incredible. I'd like you to see a portion of what he said at the end of his acceptance speech about his mom.

“And last, my mom. I don't think you know what you did. You had my brother when you were 18 years old and three years later I came out. The odds were stacked against us: a single parent with two boys by the time

you were 21 years old. Everybody told us we weren't supposed to be here. We moved from apartment to apartment by ourselves. One of the best memories I have is when we moved into our first apartment: no bed, no furniture and we just all sat in the living room and just hugged each other because we thought we made it. When something good happens to you, I don't know about you guys but I tend to look back to what brought me here. And you'd wake me up in the middle of the night in the summertime, making me run up a hill and making me do push-ups, screaming at me from the sidelines at my games and 8 or 9 years old. We weren't supposed to be here. You made us believe. You kept us off the street. You put clothes on our backs, food on the table. When you didn't eat, you made sure we ate and you went to sleep hungry. You sacrificed for us. You're the real MVP."

Did you hear what he said right at the end? "You're the real MVP," talking to his mom. And I realize we could find certain aspects of that story that might not be just right, I probably could have done without a Tweet or two that was on the screen but the key is: here's a man, that's being a real man who in front of your peers wants to be sure that you're honoring your mother for her great love for you. Anderson Cooper was talking about that speech later on that night and he said, "Kevin Durant has put all the rest of us sons in a bad way because there's no way we're going to top that speech."

Here are some of the many ways this can apply to us. I hope you've been seeing applications as we've worked our way through but here are some more: love avoids coarse jesting or indecent talk. It's not indecent. Love does not act unbecomingly. Could I ask you a question just about that? Do you curse in your home, men? Love is not rude. I'm going to tell you, if you have a foul mouth in your home or you have a foul mouth at the office, you either need to repent like right now or stop at the Welcome Center, they have some scissors there, and ask them to cut out your tongue. Love is not rude.

Do you avoid off-color humor? Do people know there are certain things you're not going to talk about, you're not going to laugh at? When you come into the room, do people sometimes say, "Clean it up. So-and-so is here." I actually think that's a good thing. And you say, "Well, they kind of mock me." Let them mock. In the quiet moments they respect you. Love is not rude.

Love thinks carefully about the timing and setting of one's words and actions. Some people get upset about something, they demand to talk about it right at that moment even if it's not the appropriate setting, it's not a convenient time for the other person. That's rude. A loving person says, "I want to be sure we discuss this at a place that's best for you, at a time that's best for you, in a tone that is best for you, with words that are best for you." Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances.

Many of us had mothers just like that, huh? Their love motivated them to act becomingly. They did the right thing in the right way at the right time. It's beautiful when that happens.

We're having some of our senior citizens reserve some of the homes that we're going to be building in our senior living community starting here in the next few weeks. Had a delightful conversation with one of our dear senior saints who came and she said, "Now listen, I'd like to reserve that particular lot but if somebody comes behind me who would prefer to have that one, that's fine, just give it to them, I'll take whichever is left." Now, here's a woman who has been a godly mom; here's a woman who's been a godly woman. She has developed love that did not act unbecomingly so much that it just squirts out of the way she thinks about any kind of decision including the location of her senior living home.

I'm thankful for my own mom who was a great example of love to me on occasions many times when I was being anything but loveable. We had that cute little video of the little kid doing some cutey little things, we could have a video of Stevie doing a lot of bad things. I'm glad that was before cellphone video cameras, frankly.

I'm thankful for my wife, Chris, and especially the way she creates such a loving environment for our special needs son. Drew is sick today and so Chris had to be up last night with him and I've never heard Chris be rude to Drew. For 21 years raising a special needs son without rudeness.

By the way, all of this requires, it necessitates a personal relationship with Christ. You understand that. To live in a way that is consistent with this text, you can't pull it off on your own and that's why for some who hear this message today, God may be using the way you fall short if you'll be honest about it, as an occasion to bring you to a point of repentance where you'll admit your need and place your faith and trust in Christ. I realize we might have some people here today who say, "Let me tell you the one reason I'm here in church: my wife dragged me. I said, what would you like for Mother's Day? She said, please come to church with me." Or you're a son or a daughter and you're here and that's the reason why. Listen, let me tell you something and you may not like hearing this but you need to hear it: the Bible says something specifically about you and that is the reason God gave you a believing wife, the reason God gave you a believing mother, according to 1 Corinthians 7, the same text I quoted from earlier, is to sanctify you. Do you know what that means? That means to put you in a special place where as a result of seeing a Christian woman, imperfect but a Christian woman and you know it, to put you in a better position where you would repent and believe. And you need to do that and you need to do that today.

You might say, "You're making me feel uncomfortable right now." Fine. I would rather you felt uncomfortable right now if that's what it took to bring you to a point of repentance than for you whistling your way through the graveyard of your life and then coming before a holy God and finally understanding what the book of Hebrews says when it states, "It is a fearful thing to stand in the hands of a living God." And I would encourage you, I would invite you on Mother's Day to place your faith and trust in Christ and after you've done that, you need to run to your momma, you need to run to your wife

and thank her. Forget the candy. If you need to, place your faith and trust in Christ while you have the opportunity to do so.

Lastly, love is concerned about behaving decently and in order. Remember, the key to this whole word is indecent and it's interesting if you know your Bible well, you know that's the way this whole discussion ends. When you get all the way to 1 Corinthians 14:40, the final word on the matter is, "All things must be done properly and in an orderly, decent manner." Maybe that needs to be one of the take-aways just to get in the habit of asking the question: what's the decent thing to do? Having a confrontation: it's decent and right for me to get the log out of my own eye first. I'm on a sales counter and the person checking me out is slow or struggling: it's decent to be kind and reaffirming instead of being rude.

We saw a great article in the paper yesterday about our Community Development Corporation. May God helps us as we're working with people struggling with poverty downtown to always be known as a loving congregation instead of being rude. Let's ask ourselves today and this week, friends: do we think we're nailing biblical love when maybe in some ways we're not. Let's work at this matter of being sure that our love is not rude.

Let's stand together for prayer, please.

Father in heaven, Lord, we know that when we come together we want to hear from you and, Lord, we want to celebrate all the good things that are happening in our lives and give you praise for it but we understand that we're not nailing it in many ways like we think we are. So, thank you that your word can help us and if repentance needs to take place in order to get to a better place, I pray that we would do that. If requesting forgiveness from you or others needs to take place, may that happen as well. Lord, we pray this in the kind name of our loving Savior. Amen.