

Eternity Daily Bible Study

The Importance Of Love

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Number: 13

Verses: Ephesians 4:2

Topic: Bearing With One Another In Love

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Ephesians 4:2 *with all humility and meekness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,*

Romans 15:1-3 *Then we who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. (2) Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good, to building up. (3) For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, (5) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; (6) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; (7) Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Love is patient and puts up with much! Deep patience is a sign of true grace and it is God's patience that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Bullies are impatient however great men and women of God are forbearing. Forbearance gives great dignity to the wearer.

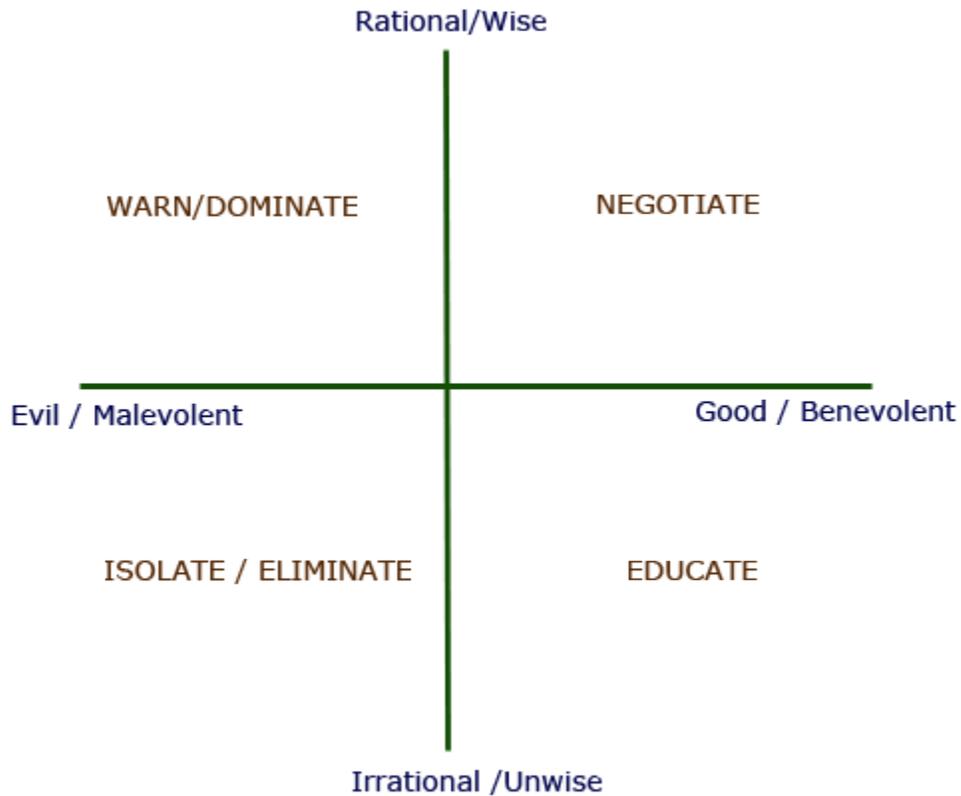
On the other hand, if you want to trash all your relationships, just be impatient and put up with nothing, go and point everything negative out, and do so in public! Resentment breeds inside of children with impatient parents and workers with impatient bosses. (Then resentment turns into rejection and rejection into revenge).

So patience, forbearance and long-suffering are essential to maintaining "peace in the household" (which is that group of around 20-30 people at the core of our existence). We have to "bear with" our husband, wife, children, key leaders, close friends, in-laws and family of origin. We have to supply "grit" to those relationships and decide to preserve them at almost any cost. Irritability in key relationships is like sandpaper, it rubs them thin!

However Proverbs tells us that there are some people we should NOT be patient with: the violent, the corrupt, the persistent fool, the prideful and scornful person, the immoral temptress, the chronically lazy "sluggard", the flatterer, the toxic gossip, and so on. These people need to either be avoided or rebuked.

Often we are impatient with good people (because they will take it) and tolerant of wicked people (because we are either scared of their power or beguiled by their charms)!

The following diagram is a "Response Chart" that is a quick guide on how to handle people:



The graph divides people into four groups, along the lines of wisdom and goodness (a quick note I am not talking about total goodness which is God's alone, but about general considerateness and benevolence):

A person who is both good and wise (in the upper right quadrant) can be negotiated with, they will listen to you and they are rational and will think carefully about plans and consider their own self-interest in a balanced manner. You are to forbear them be patient with them and sit down and talk with them as equals. They generally can be trusted.

The people on the lower right quadrant (good but unwise) need to be educated, counseled and disciplined. They may not even be acting in their own self-interest (let alone yours) and can neurotic, clueless or naive. However they want to be good and wish you no harm. These people you pastor, pray for and instruct. You are very, very patient with these people but you do not grant them any serious responsibility.

The people in the upper left quadrant is evil/malevolent but is still rational with worldly wisdom. They are evil and crafty, and act solely in their own interests and *against* your interests. Negotiating with them as cooperative equals won't work. They have deep

cunning, are often manipulative and are full of selfish ambition. They may completely lack a conscience, empathy or remorse. Don't appeal to their "good nature" and certainly don't trust them. Talk softly, carry a big stick and draw firm lines in the sand with them. You warn and discipline these people and you may need to make it clear that you have a contract and a lawyer, or that you will even call the police.

The person on the lower left is both evil and chaotic, Pol Pot of Cambodia was in this category, he was a deeply superstitious murderous tyrant surrounded by occult practitioners. Pol Pot's powerful evil and utter folly starved whole populations to death. This category contains violent criminals, habitual predators, terrorists and suicide bombers. These people are malevolent and mad and do not even consider their own self-interest.

They do not even respect force but will blow themselves up with a "I Lose – You Lose" mentality. Such people simply cannot be dealt with, have no insight and no good intentions that can be appealed to. Leave these guys to the SWAT team! They can only be isolated (imprisoned) or eliminated. Flee fast, because forbearing them can literally be suicide.

Hopefully your family, close fiends and key leaders are all on the right hand side and can be either negotiated with or educated. These are the people whom you love, forbear, and give yourself for. The household of grace.

On the left hand side Jesus says in Matthew "beware of men.." so there are some folk we should be very wary of, and if possible, disconnect from.

Ok then, should we forbear with the phone company, cable company or mortgage company when they are clearly and illegally ripping us off? (For instance the time when over \$200 was added to our mortgage when the bank "thought we would like mortgage insurance" and just added it without our consent). No! This is when you get on the phone and politely threaten a lawsuit. Yes, really.

Don't blow up, don't abuse the person in the call center, but make it clear that you will NOT put up with being ripped off. If they won't listen and the amount is substantial send in a formal fax lodging a legal complaint. I have never yet had to go to court but I do get things sorted out. (Fax works much better than e-mail because it implies an office, money and power).

Nine times out of ten, that smiling salesperson at the used-car lot does not have your best interest at heart. The kindness is totally fake. They are in the shrewd, evil, manipulative, worldly wisdom category and you need to negotiate realizing that, yet treating the person with politeness and respect.

Ok, I think you get the idea now! We need to be both patient and careful. With those we love, those in our household, who are safe, we "bear all things". These are our "brothers" and we stand with them, love them, take them back, mend the fences, grant grace and find them forgiveness seventy times seven! On the other hand even Jesus did not forbear with the Pharisees but rebuked them and isolated (said absolutely nothing to) Herod. Jesus educated and discipled the clueless but good (e.g Nathaniel), rebuked the smart but evil Pharisees, and will totally crush Satan.

Forbearance is part of growing people! Paul “suffered all things for the sake of the elect” and pastors groan and travail over the flock and parents weep over children. We love the person but hate the sin, and pray for grace! Remember God is patient with you so you ought to be patient with others!

Blessings,

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