



Following Jesus Means You Never Stop Believing and You Love Everyone

Pastor Larry Vriezelaar | July 12, 2020 | First Congregational Church

■ The same love that God gives to you, you are to offer to everybody else that you come in contact with. It's not an option or a suggestion. It's a command: ***"Now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other"*** (John 13:34 NLT).

If you are a follower of Christ, you must love everybody—whether you like them or not—in the same way that Christ loves you. That means you are to accept them **completely**, love them **unconditionally**, forgive them **totally**, and consider them **extremely valuable**.

Loving others in this way will transform your relationships!

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:7, ***"Love never stops being patient, never stops believing, never stops hoping, never gives up."***

This is how God loves you. God never stops being **patient** with you. God never stops **believing** in you. God never stops **hoping** for the best in your life. **God never gives up on you**. That's what God expects you to do with everybody else.

1. **“Love never stops being patient.”** That means love extends grace. You can offer grace to others.
2. **“Love never stops believing.”** That means it expresses faith. You tell someone, “Even though we’re having a tough time, I will never stop believing in you.”
3. **“Love never stops hoping.”** That means love expects the best. Are you expecting the best in your marriage, or have you settled for less than the best?
4. **“Love never gives up”** That means love endures the worst. It means you can look at the other person and say, “You can throw everything at me, but I’m going to keep loving you, no matter what.”

Don’t ever stop believing in God and in yourself! Quite putting yourself down. Get rid of negative talk. Think before you speak. Soften your words. **A soft answer turns away wrath.**

Perhaps it’s time for a life transformation...a new beginning that offers faith , hope, and joy.

If you want to start transforming your relationships today,

I invite you to pray this prayer with me to God:

“Dear God, I admit that I have made a mess in my relationships. They are complicated and broken, and I’ve often settled for less than the best. They need a transformation! I want you to begin by changing me. Deliver me from my fears, because I can see how they make me distant and defensive and even demanding. Today and every day from now on, I want to surrender my heart to you. I want to learn to live my life in your love and be filled with your love.

“Help me to accept others, just as you’ve accepted me. Help me to love others unconditionally, just as you have loved me. Help me to forgive others totally, just as you have forgiven me. And help me to value others as much as you value me. Help me to extend grace to and express faith in the people around me. Help me to expect the best in others, and when the worst happens, help me to endure it. I ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.”