

God Says Loving People Doesn't Mean Tolerating This

By Admin | Sermon | May 25, 2026

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The concept of love has been so profoundly diluted in our modern world that we often mistake it for a passive, all-encompassing blanket of silence. We are told that to love someone is to never disagree, to never challenge, and certainly to never draw a line in the sand. But the Bible presents a version of love that is far more robust, far more dangerous to the status quo, and infinitely more healing than mere tolerance. True biblical love is not a soft sentiment; it is a fierce commitment to the truth and the ultimate well-being of the other person. And before we dive in, if this message is already stirring something in you, hit the FOLLOW button and stay connected to God's Word daily, because understanding the difference between godly love and dangerous tolerance is the key to protecting your soul and your calling. We often feel a crushing guilt when we consider saying "no" to someone's toxic behavior, fearing that we are failing the commandment to "love your neighbor." But God never intended for your heart to be a doormat for the enemy's work.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see a man who was the literal embodiment of love, yet He was the least "tolerant" person to ever walk the earth when it came to things that destroyed people's lives. He loved the woman at the well, but He didn't tolerate the lie she was living. He loved the Pharisees, but He didn't tolerate their hypocrisy. There is a sacred "this" that God says we must not tolerate, and it usually involves the patterns of sin, manipulation, and spiritual decay that masquerade as "needs" or "personality traits." Real love seeks the best for the other, and the best for anyone is always their alignment with the truth of God. If we allow people to continue in destructive patterns without boundaries, we aren't loving them; we are enabling their spiritual demise. This message is about reclaiming the strength of your "no" so that your "yes" to God can have its full weight.

We are going to explore how to navigate relationships with the wisdom of a serpent and the gentleness of a dove. You were called to be a light, not a victim. You were called to be a servant, not a slave to the whims and sins of others. By the end of this journey, you will have the biblical permission—and the spiritual mandate—to set boundaries that honor God. Love is a bridge, but even the strongest bridge has weight limits and guardrails. It is time to stop feeling guilty for protecting what God has entrusted to you. Let's look at what the Word of God actually says about the limit of tolerance and the true architecture of a heart that loves like Christ.

Number 1: The Deception of Enabling vs. Encouraging

The first thing we must distinguish is the difference between encouraging someone's growth and enabling their sin. Biblical love, as described in 1 Corinthians 13:6, "does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth." When we tolerate behavior that is clearly contrary to God's Word—such as chronic dishonesty, substance abuse, or emotional manipulation—under the

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guise of "being supportive," we are actually participating in the unrighteousness. Enabling is when we shield someone from the natural consequences of their choices. By doing so, we steal from them the very "rock bottom" that God might be using to lead them to repentance.

Think of the Prodigal Son. His father loved him deeply, but the father did not go to the pigpen to pay the son's debts. He didn't send a care package to make the son's rebellion more comfortable. He stayed home. He allowed the hunger and the shame to do their work in the son's heart. If the father had "tolerated" the rebellion by making it easier for the son to stay in a far country, the son might never have come to his senses. True love has the courage to let someone feel the weight of their own decisions. It is a hard posture to take, but it is the only one that leads to true transformation.

In our daily lives, this looks like refusing to lie for someone, refusing to fund a destructive lifestyle, or refusing to be the dumping ground for someone's toxic anger. We often worry that setting these boundaries will drive the person away. It might. But if your presence only serves to make their sin more comfortable, then your presence is actually a barrier to their salvation. We must be willing to be the "bad guy" in their narrative if it means being a faithful servant in God's narrative.

Encouragement says, "I believe you can change through Christ"; enabling says, "I'll help you stay the same."

This shift requires us to find our identity in God's approval rather than the person's comfort. If you are a "people pleaser," you will find it nearly impossible to stop enabling because your "love" is actually a form of self-protection—you want to avoid the conflict. But Galatians 1:10 asks, "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God?" When we choose to stop tolerating sin, we are choosing to please God. We are trusting that His methods for correction are better than our methods of accommodation.

Practical application involves a clear conversation. It's saying, "I love you too much to watch you destroy yourself, and therefore I can no longer participate in this behavior with you." It's shifting from a passive observer to an active guardian of the truth. When you stop enabling, you create a vacuum that only God can fill. That is the moment where real miracles happen. Don't be afraid of the silence or the distance that follows a boundary; it is often the very soil where God plants the seed of change.

Number 2: Protecting the Temple of the Holy Spirit

We often forget that our first responsibility is our own stewardship before God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 reminds us, "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit... therefore honor God with your bodies." This doesn't just apply to physical health; it applies to your emotional

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and spiritual well-being. If you are "tolerating" someone who constantly drains your peace, mocks your faith, or abuses your kindness, you are allowing the Temple of God to be defiled. Loving others does not mean giving them the keys to your sanctuary so they can trash it.

If this message inspires you, don't forget to FOLLOW for more Bible insights every week. God has given you a specific portion of grace and energy to fulfill your calling. If that energy is being entirely consumed by a toxic relationship that refuses to change, you are essentially giving away what belongs to God. In the book of Nehemiah, when the enemies of God tried to distract him from building the wall by inviting him to a meeting, Nehemiah replied, "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down." He refused to tolerate the distraction because he valued the work.

Protecting your "temple" means recognizing that not everyone deserves a front-row seat in your life. Jesus had the crowds, He had the seventy, He had the twelve, and He had the three. He had levels of intimacy based on trust and spiritual alignment. If someone is consistently bringing chaos, doubt, and sin into your inner circle, it is your biblical duty to move them to a different "row." You still love them, you still pray for them, and you still desire their best, but you do not allow them to influence your spirit.

This is especially important when it comes to "bad company." 1 Corinthians 15:33 is very direct: "Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character." Tolerance often masquerades as "missionary dating" or "missionary friendship," where we think we can hang out in the dark without catching the cold. But the Bible warns that the influence usually flows from the one with the lower standard to the one with the higher standard unless strict boundaries are in place. Protecting your temple is an act of worship.

When you set a boundary to protect your peace, you aren't being selfish; you are being a good steward. You are ensuring that you have enough oil in your lamp to do what God has actually called you to do. If you are constantly exhausted by the drama of someone who refuses to walk in the light, you will have nothing left for the people God has actually assigned to you. Drawing a line is saying to God, "I value what You've put in me enough to protect it from those who would disregard it."

Number 3: The Biblical Mandate for Rebuking in Love

We live in a culture that views any form of correction as "judgmental." However, the Bible views correction as a vital function of love. Proverbs 27:6 says, "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses." If you see a brother or sister walking toward a cliff and you say nothing because you want to "tolerate" their choices, you are not acting as a friend. You are acting as an accomplice to their fall. To love someone means to care enough about their soul to risk their

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temporary anger.

Matthew 18 gives us a clear protocol for dealing with someone who is in the wrong. It starts with a private conversation, moves to a small group, and eventually involves the community. The goal is always "to win your brother over." Notice that the goal isn't to be right; it's restoration. But restoration is impossible without an initial confrontation of the truth. If we skip the rebuke, we skip the chance for healing. Loving people means refusing to tolerate the lies they tell themselves.

Consider Nathan the prophet and King David. David had committed adultery and murder, and he was living in the "tolerance" of his own denial. Nathan didn't come to him and say, "I just want you to know I love you and I'm not here to judge." He told a story that exposed David's sin and then pointed a finger and said, "You are the man!" That "wound" from a friend led to David's greatest psalm of repentance, Psalm 51. If Nathan had been "tolerant," David might have died in his sin.

Rebuking in love requires a heart that is free of self-righteousness. Galatians 6:1 warns us to restore others "gently," while watching ourselves so we aren't also tempted. It's not about looking down on someone; it's about reaching down to pull them up. But you cannot pull someone up if you are unwilling to acknowledge that they are down. Tolerance is often the lazy man's version of love because it requires no courage and no sacrifice. Rebuke, however, requires you to put your comfort on the line for the sake of another's eternity.

If someone in your life is living in a way that dishonors God and hurts others, and you have a relationship with them, God may be calling you to be the Nathan in their life. Do not let the fear of being called "judgmental" stop you from being "faithful." A true friend loves at all times, and sometimes that love looks like a hard truth that breaks a heart so that God can reshape it.

Number 4: Discernment and the Fruit of the Spirit

How do we know when we've crossed the line from healthy love into dangerous tolerance? The answer is found in discernment. Philippians 1:9-10 says, "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best." Love is not supposed to be blind; love is supposed to be insightful. We need the Holy Spirit to show us the "fruit" of the relationships in our lives. If this message inspires you, don't forget to FOLLOW for more Bible insights every week.

Jesus said you would know a tree by its fruit. If a relationship consistently produces the fruit of the flesh—discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, and immorality—then it is a tree that needs to be addressed. We cannot "tolerate" a tree that produces poison in our lives and expect to stay healthy. Discernment allows us to see past people's words to their actual patterns. Many people

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use the language of "love" to demand tolerance of their "sin." Discernment helps you see the difference.

Discernment also tells us when a season of "bearing with one another" has turned into a season of "shaking the dust off our feet." There is a time to be patient, as God is patient with us. But there is also a time, as Jesus instructed His disciples in Matthew 10:14, to recognize when a house or a town is not receiving the peace you bring. If you have offered grace, offered truth, and offered support, and it is consistently trampled underfoot, discernment tells you that your "pearls" are being wasted (Matthew 7:6).

We must also use discernment to check our own motives. Are we tolerating things because we are "patient," or because we are afraid of being alone? Are we setting boundaries because we are "holy," or because we want to punish the other person? The Holy Spirit is the only one who can untangle these knots in our hearts. When we walk in the Spirit, He gives us a "knowing" about when to stay and when to walk away.

Practice asking God for an "educated heart." Don't just react emotionally; respond spiritually. When someone pushes your boundaries, don't just get angry—get prayerful. Ask, "Lord, what is the fruit of this interaction? Is this drawing us closer to You, or is it feeding a demon of compromise?" Discernment is the guardrail that keeps love from veering off into the ditch of self-destruction.

Number 5: The Example of Jesus and the Money Changers

One of the most powerful examples of "non-tolerance" in the Bible is Jesus in the Temple. We often prefer the image of Jesus with the little children or the lost sheep, but we must also look at Jesus with the whip of cords. When He saw the house of prayer being turned into a den of thieves, He didn't offer a "inclusive" dialogue. He flipped tables. He drove them out. Why? Because His love for His Father's glory and the spiritual welfare of the people outweighed His "tolerance" for corruption.

This tells us that there are some things—specifically things that exploit the vulnerable or mock the sacred—that deserve our holy indignation. If we love the things God loves, we must, by definition, hate the things God hates. Psalm 97:10 says, "Let those who love the Lord hate evil." If you "tolerate" evil in your presence without a stirring of the soul, you must ask if your love for God has grown cold. Jesus' anger was not a sin; it was a manifestation of His holiness.

In our lives, "flipping tables" doesn't mean physical violence, but it does mean a radical refusal to participate in or silenteze corruption. It might mean speaking up when someone is being gossiped about. It might mean refusing to stay in a church that has abandoned the Gospel. It might mean

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ending a business partnership that relies on shady dealings. Love for the Truth requires us to be intolerant of the Lie.

Jesus was protecting the "space" for people to encounter God. When we tolerate toxic behavior in our families or churches, we are allowing "clutter" to fill the space where God wants to move. We think we are being "nice," but we are actually being obstacles to the move of the Spirit. Sometimes the most loving thing you can do for a community is to "clear the court" of those who are exploiting the grace of God for their own gain.

The zeal of Jesus was fueled by His focus on the Father's mission. When you are focused on what God has called you to do, you will naturally have less tolerance for anything that hinders that mission. This is not about being a "curmudgeon"; it's about being a "sentinel." A sentinel loves the city so much that he is intolerant of the enemy at the gate. Be a sentinel for your soul and your home.

Number 6: The Difference Between Forgiveness and Trust

A major source of confusion in Christian relationships is the mixing of forgiveness and trust. We are commanded by God to forgive everyone, infinitely. Colossians 3:13 says, "Forgive as the Lord forgave you." This is non-negotiable. However, the Bible nowhere commands us to trust everyone. Forgiveness is a gift of grace that we give to those who have hurt us so that we can be free from bitterness. Trust, on the other hand, is a responsibility that must be earned through consistent fruit and repentance.

Loving someone means you forgive them for the debt they owe you. It means you release the right to seek revenge. But it does not mean you put them back in the position where they can hurt you again. If a wolf is "sorry" for eating a sheep, you can forgive the wolf, but you'd be a fool to let him back into the pen. "Tolerating" someone back into a position of trust without evidence of change is not biblical love; it is spiritual negligence.

Jesus Himself did not entrust Himself to everyone. John 2:24 says, "But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people." He loved them, He died for them, and He served them—but He did not give everyone access to His inner life or His mission. He used discernment regarding who was ready for that level of trust. We must do the same. If someone has repeatedly violated your boundaries or betrayed your confidence, loving them looks like forgiving them from a safe distance.

True repentance is more than an apology. It is a "metanoia"—a change of mind and direction. When someone is truly repentant, they will respect your boundaries. They will say, "I understand

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why you can't trust me yet, and I'm willing to work to earn that back." If someone demands that you "trust them if you really love them," they are using a form of spiritual manipulation. That is exactly what God says you should not tolerate.

By separating forgiveness from trust, you protect your heart while keeping it soft. You can walk in total freedom from resentment while still walking in total wisdom regarding your associations. This balance is what allows you to live a life of "long-suffering" without becoming a victim of "long-abusing." Forgive immediately, but trust slowly and biblically.

Number 7: Walking Away as an Act of Love

There are times in the Bible where the most "loving" thing to do was to walk away. When the Rich Young Ruler refused to give up his idols to follow Jesus, Jesus didn't chase him down the road, lowering the standard or offering a "compromise" plan. The Bible says Jesus "looked at him and loved him," and then He let him walk away. Sometimes, the only way to love someone is to let them experience the reality of their choice to reject the truth.

Tolerating a relationship where the other person is determined to stay in rebellion only serves to give them a false sense of security. If you stay and "support" them in their sin, they may never realize how far they have strayed from God. Your departure can be the "alarm clock" that finally wakes them up. Paul tells the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 5 to "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord." This sounds harsh, but it was an act of ultimate love—removing the protection of the community so the person would realize their need for God.

Walking away is not about "quitting" on people; it's about acknowledging the limits of your influence. You are not the Savior. You are not the Holy Spirit. If someone has made it clear that they value their "this"—their sin, their pride, their toxicity—more than they value the relationship or the truth, then you must honor their free will. You release them into the hands of God, which is the safest and most effective place for them to be.

This requires a deep trust in God's sovereignty. We often stay in "tolerant" situations because we think we are the only ones who can save the person. We think if we leave, they'll be lost forever. But God loves them more than you do. He has ways of reaching them that you don't. Sometimes your exit is the very thing that clears the path for God's entrance.

Walking away also preserves your own testimony. If you are constantly associated with someone who is public and unrepentant in their rebellion against God, you risk blurring the lines for those who are watching you. You must choose the honor of God over the comfort of a toxic connection.

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Walking away is the final boundary, a sober acknowledgment that while love is infinite, intimacy is a privilege.

Conclusion

God's definition of love is far more beautiful and far more rigorous than the world's version of tolerance. We have seen that to love people like Jesus does is to desire their holiness more than their happiness. It is a love that refuses to enable destruction, a love that protects the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and a love that has the courage to rebuke and correct. We have learned that discernment is the eyes of love, helping us see when "bearing with someone" has become "sinning with someone."

We've discovered the vital distinction between the command to forgive and the wisdom of trust, and we've seen that sometimes the most profound act of love is to walk away and leave someone in the capable hands of the Father. Do not let the world shame you into a tolerance that leads to decay. God has called you to a "sincere love" (Romans 12:9), and that same verse tells us exactly how to do it: "Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."

As you move forward, ask the Holy Spirit to give you the strength to draw the lines He has already drawn in His Word. You will find that as you stop tolerating the "this" in your life—the sin, the manipulation, the toxicity—you will have so much more room for the "Him." Your relationships will become healthier, your peace will become deeper, and your light will shine brighter because it is no longer being smothered by the weight of compromise. You are a child of the Truth, and the Truth will always set you free.

Before you go, make sure to FOLLOW and subscribe, like this video, and share it with someone who needs encouragement today. And join us next time as we uncover another powerful truth from God's Word.