



People Are The Worst | Dealing With Draining Relationships | Ronnie Johnson  
Weekly Study | 10.13.19

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

**If you had to eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?**

SHARE

Welcome to our new series called *People are The Worst...and why we need them.*

Our life involves people, including the difficult ones. No matter how hard we try, we just can't avoid them. In fact, if we look in the mirror, let's be honest, we can sometimes be part of the problem. Okay, so obviously not you, but definitely the person next to you.

So, what does God have to say about dealing with difficult people? What about judgmental people or draining people? How should we react to those who let us down? How do you love those who are hard to love?

We felt led to talk about this topic, because we are facing a relational breakdown epidemic. More than any generation prior, we are more connected than ever, yet that connectedness has not led to deeper, healthier relationships. Instead, the data has revealed that although we are hyper-connected, we are one of the loneliest generations to exist. The truth is that God has a design for relationships – a real plan for deep, abiding and life-giving relationships, but many of us don't want to do the hard work involved in fostering them. In this series we are looking at what God says about relationships and learn about how we do relationships God's way.

Despite being hyper-connected through smart phones, social media and continual news cycles, we face an epidemic of loneliness, what is one contributing factor to why people feel this way?

When you think about your relationships, what kinds of relationships feel draining to you?

G R O W

**Read John 15:12; Jeremiah 31:3; 1 John 4:7, 11-12**

There was no one, in the history of all time, that gave more to relationships than Jesus. Day after day, Jesus poured out time, energy and love to people, sometimes even late into the night. People continually just took, took, took from Jesus; so many broken people, with hurt, sickness, demonic oppression, and loss. Yet, Jesus loved in a way that was meaningful and unshakeable, so how did he do it? Well, he spent time with his Father, Jesus went to lonely places to pray and receive and was able to then pour out to others.

Jesus loved differently, he loved with an “everlasting love.” The type of love that is unchanging, a love we can build our lives on and learn from. We don’t need to try harder to love; we need to receive an everlasting type of love. Through the power of the Spirit of God we will be able to pour out real love, even on those difficult or draining people in our lives.

**After reading those Scripture references, what is important if we are to show love to people?**

**What is one thing you notice about yourself when you try to give love on an empty tank?**

**If you are comfortable, and without using names, how has God specifically helped you to love a draining person? What was the result of that love and what did you learn?**

M O V E

**Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

This weekend, Ronnie reminded us that we cannot love well until we fully understand and

receive God's love for us. When we live out of this love, everything changes. The message translation says it this way, "You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth (Matthew 5:13). When we love the way God loves, this makes the invisible God, visible to all those around us. But we know that to love like this requires much and can be exhausting.

**Is it more difficult for you to receive God's love or give it to others? Why do you think that is?**

When it's difficult to love well, this is when we go to read truth and take a deeper look into what God says about how to love.

1 Corinthians 13:7 gives four ways in which to choose to love and love well.

1. **Love is a continual choice.** Choose to give grace even when it may be a "take" relationship, full of hurt and exhaustion. Still choose to love.
2. **Love is a continuous expression of faith.** First learn to trust God and then to trust people. If we cannot learn to trust God, we will never be able to trust people.
3. **Love expects the best.** Always have their best interest at heart knowing that they will do the same.
4. **Love chooses to endure the worst.** It's the "never giving up" kind of love.

By choosing to love like this, God's love is being perfected in us. Then we get a clearer picture of the Love of God.

**Out of these four ways, which one do you feel like you struggle with most? Which one do you feel like you are living out well?**

**Who in your life has shown you this kind of love to you? How has this changed the way you love others?**

When you find it challenging to love someone this week, stop and ask yourself if you are receiving and believing that God loves you. We love because Christ first loved us.

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying for each other. If you are in a co-ed group, it can be helpful to break up into two groups in order to share more easily about your prayer request.

T O G O

1 John 4:7

Those who are loved by God, let his love continually pour from you to one another, because God is love. Everyone who loves is fathered by God and experiences an intimate knowledge of him.

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