

to give thanks to those who deserve it. Often we are so self orientated that we do not express thanks to others. What can we learn from 1Thessalonians 5:18?

**7. Accept Others.** George Bernard Shaw, in his play "Pygmalion," speaks of "having the same manner for all human souls: in short, behaving as if you were in heaven ... where one soul is as good as another." The crux of accepting others: is welcoming all with the same enthusiasm as we desire to be received. What does Romans 15:7 say about acceptance?

**8. Rediscover Silence.** In an age when background noises are constant, some fear we are becoming accustomed to noise. Noise can take us away from ourselves; silence can open the door to our innermost thoughts and tranquility. We need to be silent to hear the whisper of God. What does the Holy Spirit say in Psalm 37:7 and 46:10?

**9. Listen.** The act of listening takes work. Instead of focusing on what we want to say and our own needs, good listening requires that our attention go to others. How refreshing to demonstrate that we value others before ourselves.

How non-competitive and civil. What does James 1:19-20 teach us?

*"Dear friends, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your*

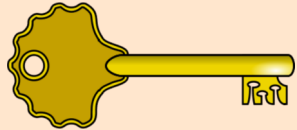
*anger can never make things right in God's sight."* (NLT).

**10. Keep Your Cool.** Medical science tells us that non-assertive behavior is a health risk. On the other hand, being a bully is just as unhealthy as being a doormat. The key is to find that happy medium where you express your needs without intruding on others' needs and do it in a calm and kindly way. What can we learn from Ephesians 4:26-27?

**Let us be known for our Christian Courtesy**

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So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36  
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# 10 Keys to Christian Courtesy



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## Keys to Christian Courtesy

Philippians 2:1-5

Have you noticed that we seem to be very busy these days and often preoccupied with our own lives and activities? One of the areas of life that has been impressed upon me by the Holy Spirit is that of common courtesy in communication and the need to give others preferential treatment of our interests and time.

As Christians we are given careful instruction to live in such a way that we exemplify the characteristics of Jesus Christ. This means we will be different than others, in that we will practice kind consideration, respect and practical courtesy in all we do.

I can think of at least 10 Keys to Courtesy. It is very important today to be courteous in our relationships particularly as social and moral values are being replaced by crudeness, rudeness and ugliness.

The results are evident. People feel hurt, misunderstood, rejected and lonely. This ends in some form of depression. We see people being 'angst' and being uptight with each other over the slightest incident, remark or action.

Courtesy is also a basic outgrowth of the Christian belief in the importance of civility. We need help to focus on that which will help interpersonal relationships.

The Bible instructs us to say things that encourages others rather than tears them down. Ephesians 4:29, says *"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them."* (NLT).

But, we need more. We need some simple guiding principles to raise awareness and impact behavior.

**1. Respect Others.** The ability to see the actual individual is part of acknowledging each other, and the first step to positive regard. Respect for the whole person entails listening to others' opinions, their feelings, their time, even their physical space. At the core of "respect others" is the "golden rule," - *"do unto others as you would have them do unto you"* (Luke 6:31).

**2. Think Positively.** Wouldn't life be more joyful if we all viewed it through a glass "half-full" rather than "half-empty"? Countless studies have demonstrated that those who think positively live longer and happier lives. A positive attitude is an emotional contagion we want to spread. What positive things are listed in Philippians 4:8?

**3. Pay Attention.** How often do we go through our daily routines as human robots with little awareness of others surrounding us? The root of "attention" is "to attend to." That means that every act of acknowledgement or kindness

begins with "attending to" the other person. In other words, to be at our best in our human encounters, get off of auto pilot and pay attention. What does Philippians 2: 3-4 say?

**4. Make A Difference.** Here's an expression that has become such a part of our cultural lexicon that it has almost lost meaning. *Almost* is the key word, for the concept of making a difference has never been more valid.

Our culture makes self-gratification a must-do, reducing the moral energy we have for others. Self-centered behaviors can put altruism in the back seat. It doesn't have to be that way. There are opportunities to make a difference in every encounter.

Our goal in life should be, "If I can help somebody as I pass along, then my living will not be in vain". What does 1John 3:17 say about helping others?

**5. Speak Kindly.** The flip side of speak kindly is, Why be rude? Words of have a way of putting others down or lifting them up. It costs nothing to be kind. Kindness can inspire others, lift their spirits, and help them, make sense of life. And isn't that a great way to make a difference? What are we instructed in Ephesians 4:29?

**6. Say 'Thank You'.** Such a simple deed, the acknowledging of an act of service or kindness by saying "thank you." It is not hard