

052619 How Did Jesus Deal With Difficult People?” The Difficult Ones Series

Review of series... First week..how to deal with difficult people...second one we are all difficult people...today Most importantly how did Jesus deal with difficult people...

listen We all know people whom we find “difficult” in one way or another, and we’re all called upon to deal with difficult people at some time or another. A difficult person may be one who is condescending, argumentative, belligerent, selfish, flippant, prideful, or simply rude. Difficult people seem to know just how to “push one’s buttons” and stir up trouble. We can hide from them, ignore them, scream at them, fight them or we can deal with them. Dealing with difficult people becomes an exercise in patience, love, and grace.

I’m proposing that we deal with them , So Our response to difficult people should model the examples provided by Jesus, for He surely dealt with many difficult people during His time here on earth...and that is the key...he dealt with them in his humanity...

Jesus ...God became Flesh that he may live among us...God wrapped up in a human body...Divinity encased in humanity...that is the true glory of God...not his Godhood...but his willingness to be human...it is not his power alone that ministers to us...it is his humanity that moves our souls and a physical example of true humanity

John^{3:16} For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

So in his humanity he taught us how to act in our humanity...by the power of the Spirit living in us... let's see what we can discover together about how Jesus dealt with difficult people...

Number 1)Keep your emotions in-check...patience is required...

Jesus had to deal with the one who THE one who just can't get on Board.....their first second and usual response is negative...

A. Actually, to a lesser extent, all of the disciples fell into this category. After his Resurrection, when the men came running to the tomb, the Risen Christ confronted

them and said (Luke 24.25 Then Jesus said to them, "You are such foolish people! You find it so hard to believe ... "

1. But one stands out THOMAS. Thomas, who has earned the unwelcomed nickname "Doubting" Thomas. He is characterized by indecision, apprehension, suspicion, misgivings, pessimism and hesitation. He's the guy who wants proof for everything.

A.. Thomas had to see it to believe it and he preferred to look at the dark side of things.

1. When Jesus' decided to return to Bethany because Lazarus was ill, Thomas, in exasperation, knowing that to return to the vicinity of Jerusalem was dangerous, threw up his hands and said "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

John 11:14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

- **Thomas..why are you going back near Jerusalem...they are going to kill us... it's a bad plan..but whatever you are the boss...**
- **Jesus didn't engage...don't always engage...do what you say**

Thomas speaks again in John 14:5. There, Jesus had just explained that he was going away to prepare a heavenly home for his followers, and that one day they would join him there. Thomas reacted by saying,

John 14:5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

- **Jesus you are going to heaven but not your not leaving us a map to follow so we can get there ...in other words what kind of leader are you? you are leaving us in the dark...**
- **Jesus replies patiently to fearful Thomas.....I am the way the truth and the life... I have it all handled! He calmed his fears...**

After the Resurrection Thomas was too depressed to even join the disciples in Jerusalem. He was prob. moping somewhere. When Christ appeared, he was absent and when they told him about it, he refused to believe.

John 20:24 Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But

he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

- **Thomas was a skeptic, a doubter in what he could not understand..., and the way Christ handled it was a lesson to me. Christ handled it patiently diplomatically and gently.**

²⁶ *A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”*

²⁷ *Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”*

- **Thomas you are important to me...you are valuable**
- **I am doing this for your benefit...so you can stop doubting ...which makes you difficult...**
- **he had a transforming moment...You are mine Jesus!**

²⁸ *Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”*

- **We can be like Thomas too...but Jesus says there is a special blessing for those who are not always doubting...who believe the words of Jesus...and don't withhold believing until they see proof.**

²⁹ *Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*

II. There was another difficult person in Jesus’ inner circle, actually two. They were HOTHEADS. A pair of confrontational and ambitious brothers. You probably work with people like this. These guys are not team players. They are out for number one.

B. Jesus had to deal with them daily. JAMES & JOHN. Remember, they wanted to call fire from heaven on a town that had boycotted them.

Luke 9.53-55 "but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them.?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them..."

- **These guys were volatile, explosive, unsteady, hot tempered. No wondered Jesus called them Boanerges, "Sons of Thunder."**
- **And they were ambitious (not to mention, brazen) Teacher?...here is how you should do it...**

Mark 10.35-37. Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

1. That is pretty arrogant. It's full of false-pride and self-seeking.. We all have a little bit of that in us.

So how did Jesus handle these two difficult headstrong men?

Number 2). He dealt with them gentle but firmly by confronting them. confrontational people need to be confronted...Jesus turned and rebuked them ...

Mark 10:38 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" *39* "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, *40* but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared

- you are indeed my disciples for you will drink the cup I drink...but there is a bigger plan...and who sits where is not your business... It's not about you!!
- The key to Christianity is embodied in the word OTHERS!!
- We are called to present ourselves as sacrifices, not only to the Lord but to each other.

what makes life truly hard...is not only dealing with difficult people but dealing with them when life is difficult....

Number 3) we must be a least little farther Ahead Spiritually to deal with difficult people in difficult situations

Jesus after his last supper takes his disciples up to Gethsemane...to the grove of olives...and where they press them...to get the oil...we use olive oil...if I ask you how much olive oil costs/ those who have purchased it will tell you the price but that is wrong that is not the cost... if you want to know the costs ask the olive!

- It is in the press where you show what you are made of...you do not demonstrate your Christian walk in the church! You show it when you are pressed!
- It is when you are pressed...that you demonstrate what is inside...not in the good time...it is the difficult people in your life which will squeeze out of you ..what is really inside
- And that is what we can learn from Jesus in dealing with difficult people...and this is the most difficult situation...

Matt 26:30 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. *31* Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will

strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.³² But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

³³ Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”³⁴ “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”³⁵ But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” **And all the other disciples said the same.**

- **difficult people ...like to have the last word...it is a spiritual strength ...when you can let them...and still carry on..**

³⁶ Then Jesus went with his **disciples** to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” ³⁷ He took **Peter and the two sons of Zebedee** along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. **Stay here and keep watch with me.**”

- **interestingly he takes Peter...I know your character but you are valuable and still mine...please Be with me in this most difficult time of my life...**
- **I am overwhelmed with sorrow...I cannot bear this...my father must help...at some point it comes down to you and God...**
- **Where are the 5000 people...all the people who were healed? No one but a few But fellas were with him...for all their fleshly weakness and difficult personalities...they were there!**
- **So he prayed for that he not have to do it...which is comforting because we all often pray that in situations we don't want to go through...but then he submitted...**

³⁹ **Going a little farther**, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

- **Going a little Farther...I believe is one of the key statements in not only dealing with difficult people abut aslo in dealing with impossible situations...**
- **...you must have to have the inner spiritual strength and power to go a little farther...than the weakness of your fleah can handle...**
- **It is only a strong person who can submit to the will of God...at all costs...you bring God more glory and become better under pressure than at any other time.....it is the persecution that release the blessing**

⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. ⁴¹ “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

what is the temptation? The *Temptation to not keep watch (spiritually attentive) with Jesus...resulting in a strong spirit to carry us a little farther than our weak flesh can*

The weakness of the Flesh in that it wants to fight... ..because it is motivated by self protection and self preservation... temptation to follow your flesh always results in fighting...

but when we are guided by the Spirit...we submit or obey God...submitting to God is strength.. we do not need to fight because we come from a place of strength in the Lord. He fights for us

- ***Or he stays in the spirit ...the only way you can successfully deal with difficult people ...who live by their flesh...is to submit to GoD in your Spirit...***
- ***He goes away for another hour...if it is like the first time***

⁴² **He went away a second time** and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

- ***When he returns they are asleep...he lets them be who they are...and he prays again Why? it is where they are at...he left them where they are at..to go where he must go...there is something bigger coming..***
- ***in the Spirit you begin to know when to confront and when to not...***

⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ **So he left them** and **went away once more** and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

- ***His strength needs to be able to withstand the difficult people he is about to encounter..and that is only through submission to the Spirit of God***

⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “**Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come,** and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

- ***These are the truly difficult...the ones who the Bible call our enemies...***

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

⁴⁹ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend."^[d]

Someone who can do that....can teach me how to handle difficult people... We must never give tit for tat: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing

Close...Paul the Apostle, in his chapter in Romans that dealt with the idea and process of Sanctification (in other words the process of becoming more like Christ) said this about the Marks of a True Christian and what a great way to end this series:

Romans 12:9-21 (ESV)

⁹ Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.¹⁰ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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So in his flesh he taught us how to act in our flesh...by the power of the Spirit living in us... lets see what we can disciver together about how Jesus dealt with diuifficult people...

Question: "What does the Bible say about dealing with difficult people?"

Answer: We all know people whom we find "difficult" in one way or another, and we're all called upon to deal with difficult people at some time or another. A difficult person may be one who is condescending, argumentative, belligerent, selfish, flippant, prideful, or simply rude. Difficult people seem to know just how to "push one's buttons" and stir up trouble. Dealing with difficult people becomes an exercise in patience, love, and grace.

Our response to difficult people should model the examples provided by Jesus, for He surely dealt with many difficult people during His time here on earth. In His interactions with difficult people Jesus never displayed an attitude of harsh superiority or dismissive pride; rather, He showed authority under control. He used rebuke when necessary ([John 8:47](#)), but He also dealt with difficult people by remaining silent ([John 8:6](#)), asking questions ([Mark 11:28-29](#)), pointing them to Scripture ([Mark 10:2-3](#)), and telling a story ([Luke 7:40-42](#)).

In the [Sermon on the Mount](#), Jesus was quite specific about dealing with difficult people in love and humility: "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you" ([Luke 6:27-31](#)). We must never give tit for tat: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing" ([1 Peter 3:9](#)).

In dealing with difficult people, we must guard against [pride](#). It is important to recall the admonition given by the apostle Paul in [Romans 12:3](#): "For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (see also [Philippians 2:3-4](#)). So, when we know we must deal with a difficult person, we approach the situation in meekness. Love is also key: "Love your neighbor as yourself" ([Galatians 5:14](#)). We are to show God's love to everyone—including difficult people.

The [book of Proverbs](#) provides much wisdom in dealing with difficult people. [Proverbs 12:16](#) promotes patience in our relationships: "A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult." [Proverbs 20:3](#) commends peace-making: "It is to one's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel." [Proverbs 10:12](#) encourages love: "Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs." [Proverbs 17:14](#) values foresight and deference: "Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam;

so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.” If possible, it might be best to avoid the situation altogether by choosing carefully whom we associate with: “Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered” ([Proverbs 22:24](#)).

Dealing With Idiots and Other Difficult People “It is one’s honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.”
Proverbs 20:3

Romans 12.18 "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

INTRODUCTION. Do you have some difficult people in your world?

A. I’ll bet you have some difficult people in your life too. A ...

1. SHERMAN TANK for a boss who finds every oppor. to run over you.
2. SNIPER of a relative who finds every oppor. to gun you down.
3. SABOTEUR of a cowork who lays mines in your path.

B. You’ve got Sadists, Squelchers, Snitchers, Screw Ups, Stubborn Mules, Sqawkers, SuperSensitive, Stiff Necks, Showoffs and Skeptics ...

- 1.. We can hide from them, ignore them, scream at them, fight them or we can deal with them.
2. I’m proposing that we deal with them because Proverbs 27.17 tells us "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Iron on iron talks of abrasiveness, like fingernails on a blackboard.
- 3.. It could be that providence (ie, GOD) has put these people in our life to sharpen us.

III. There’s a third kind of of demanding person I want to call your attention to. I call this guy is the BATTERING RAM, THE BACKPEDDLER.

A. This is the guy who can ...

1. Walk on water one minute only to sink the next.
2. Declare his undying loyalty in the evening, then in the morning wimp out in front of a little girl.
3. Self-righteously thump his chest, then become Satan’s spineless dupe.
4. Pledge his allegiance, then then throw in the towel.

B. I'm talking about Simon Peter, the Vacillator, the Backpeddler.

1. He was a man who thought he knew himself but, apparently, had never really counted the cost.
2. How did Christ deal with him.

John 21.15-17 (Amplified) When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these [others do--with reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion, as one loves the Father]? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You [that I have deep, instinctive, personal affection for You, as for a close friend]. He said to him, Feed My lambs. Again He said to him the second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion, as one loves the Father]? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You [that I have a deep, instinctive, personal affection for You, as for a close friend]. He said to him, Shepherd (tend) My sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with a deep, instinctive, personal affection for Me, as for a close friend]? Peter was grieved (was saddened and hurt) that He should ask him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You [that I have a deep, instinctive, personal affection for You, as for a close friend]. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

CONCLUSION. What about you? What kind of a disciple are you?

A. Are you Christ's ...

1. Raging Bull or a Chameleon?
2. Browbeater or a Bushwhacker?
3. Rule Bender or Battering Ram?
4. One-Upper or a Talent-Waster?
5. Blame Shifter or Bootlicker?
6. Wet Blanket or a Know-It-All?

B. Are you truly the Disciple He wants you to be? Remember, Jesus always confronts us when our attitude is wrong. Perhaps He is confronting you now!

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**How should we deal with difficult people?
we can start by learning to deal with other people in a Christ-like way.**

Scripture teaches us some ways that Jesus dealt with difficult people:

1. **Jesus Asks Questions:** In Chapter 12 of Luke, Jesus is asked to settle a family dispute and basically responds, “Who do you think I am, Judge Judy?” (a loose translation). It is interesting to note that Jesus asks *a lot* of questions in Scripture. Jesus’ questions were sometimes rhetorical, or challenging, and at other times he was also seeking feedback. By using questions, Jesus emphasizes his openness to the other person.

It is funny, but we humans tend not to ask a lot of questions. We assume, we pontificate, we lecture, we observe, we interrupt and we judge. But we rarely make it a point to ask other people questions. In using questions frequently, I think Jesus is modeling the behavior of a good communicator, one who cares about the other person enough to engage with them and challenge them. Even, and perhaps especially, when they are being difficult.

2. **Jesus Is Never Cornered:** In Chapter 6 of Luke, Jesus is taking a Sabbath stroll with his disciples and the Pharisees pop up out of nowhere and accuse them of breaking the Sabbath by picking grain. Jesus is unflustered. He is never scared of the people who try to slip him up or think the worst of him, because what other people think is not his focus.

Sometimes people corner us with their assumptions and judgments and we can begin to wonder if the way they see us is more objective than how we see ourselves. It is hard when we feel like others misunderstand us or do not take the time to get to know us before judging. But, like Jesus, we do not have to feel defined by the projections of other people. Our identity resides and is found in God, not in what other people try to push on us.

3. **Jesus Knows When to Ignore:** Remember that time when Jesus ticks off all of his former neighbors and friends in his hometown of Nazareth? They are so worked up that they decide to throw him off a cliff. Jesus, seeing that there is no reasoning with these people, walks through the crowd, ignores their rage, and “went on his way” (Luke 4).

Never retaliate (Matt. 5:38-39). It only lowers you to their level.

Sometimes difficult people throw tantrums, speak harshly or treat us in an abusive way (this happens online all the time). This is the cue to disengage and walk away. Jesus knew how to keep his blood pressure in check and his eyes on the prize. Of course, if we have to deal assertively with someone who does this in person, a face-to-face discussion might help. Later.

4. **Jesus Is Not Defensive:** In Chapter 10 of Mark, James and John say to Jesus: “We want you to do for us whatever we ask.” Wow. Talk about overstepping boundaries! But Jesus is not codependent, so neediness and boundary crossing is not threatening to him. He knows when to say no and when to say yes and does not beat himself up when he doesn’t make other people happy.

Sometimes people can demand more from us than what we can give them. They may try to sway us with guilt trips. Before we know it we find ourselves bending over backward trying to satisfy a needy or aggressive person (who is rarely satisfied!). But Jesus does not try to please people. Jesus does not need to protect himself from other people; God's will is enough security. This is where his non-defensiveness comes from.

5. **Jesus Is Flexible:** In Matthew 15, a Canaanite woman demands that Jesus heal his daughter and Jesus says no. But then he is moved by the woman's response of faith and heals her daughter. Jesus approaches others with an open mind. Even when he had preconceived notions, he allowed the Spirit to move him and go against his instincts.

When a difficult person approaches us, we may think, *Oh great, here we go again, or I know how this will go*, but Jesus kept an open mind when he was approached by others. You never know. The Spirit may move you, or the person who is normally difficult, to act in a different, unexpected way. Being closed to others closes us to the Holy Spirit who is working in us and in the other person.

Jesus, help me see you in everyone, even the people who challenge me. Light me up with your radiant love so that I may see you even in the most difficult of people. Every human being is made in your image. Help me to recognize you and love you in them.

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Jesus's parables are also very good ways to follow the ways that Jesus dealt with difficult people. Since God is love and we were made in the image of God, we are commanded to love one another, even our enemies. We are told to pray for and to bless each other, even our enemies.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are they doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:43 – 48).

Nothing will get better until we give it to God and allow Him to transform our hearts, cleanse our soul, and to be silent and still enough to hear His soft whisper. Maybe after all of the that, we can be more perfect like God, never God, but in His image, as we were made.



Here are 8 tips for dealing with difficult people for Christians.

Speak With Respect

Disagreements and misunderstandings will happen in life, but this is not an excuse to disrespect others. The Bible tells us that we should speak to others with love, even if we have to deal strongly with them. Love and respect should be our guide. Our speech should be kind but firm when necessary.

Ephesians 4:15 *"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"*

Proverbs 15:1 *"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."*

Colossians 4:6 *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."*

Maybe the best way to sum this all up is to deal with people in love. Love the unsaved in such a way that they will want to know more about your God.

Follow The Pattern in Matthew 18

There is a distinct pattern given in Matthew 18 for dealing with a problem. I believe this is primarily talking about dealing with problems among believers, but it can be applied in many situations. First you go privately to the one with whom the problem is. Secondly, you take a couple of people with you so that you can establish the facts and that it is no longer a "he said, she said" argument. Finally, if you cannot resolve the issue then bring it to the attention of the authorities. Again, these

verses are talking about the authority of the church, but it could also be applied to your office situation.

Matthew 18:15-17 *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."*

Along the lines of this, remember that there is safety in a multitude of counselors. Find people to talk with about the problem. These should be trusted people and not the church [gossip](#). When talking to others about the problem, they may point out to you your own faults in the conflict. Check out Proverbs 11:14; 24:6.

Sometimes You Need To Walk Away

Sometimes it is better to walk away from an argument than to continue to dwell on it. This is not liberty to walk away from everything. There are things worth fighting for. But then there are things that just aren't worth your time and allowing them to spoil your own relationship with the Lord.

You have to allow the Lord to give you direction on how to deal with different problems. After David was anointed king, but before he took the throne, he had to deal with Saul. God had already rejected Saul from being king over Israel. [David](#) realized that was a fight between Saul and God.

David allowed God to fight on his behalf. This is the same man who years before stood up for God and fought on behalf of God when facing Goliath. David had wisdom on knowing when it was

time to fight and when it was time to walk away and allow God to handle the problem.

1 Samuel 24:10 "Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed."

Their Argument May Not Be With You

Sometimes a person will take out their frustration and anger on you when you aren't really the problem. It doesn't make you feel any better, but it may keep you from carrying a burden that isn't really yours to carry. You may represent something (Christianity, God, authority) that they don't like. Try not to take the argument and conflict personally.

The Hebrew people said to Samuel that he was too old to be their leader. They wanted a king who could go out to war and fight with them. Samuel felt pretty bad about the situation. He went to God depressed and complaining. God replied that the people were not angry with Samuel but they were angry with God. They were just taking out their frustrations on the prophet.

1 Samuel 8:7 *"And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."*

Examine Yourself

Before we can effectively deal with the problems in others, we must take care of ourselves. Matthew 7 gives an illustration that may seem silly, but it talks about human nature. The idea is that someone with a large piece of wood sticking out of their

eye is criticizing another person who has a speck of dust in theirs. The one with the large piece of wood tries to ignore their own problem while dealing with the problems of others. Don't be that person. Go to God and deal with your own faults before you try to correct others. When you humble yourself before God in confession then you will more gently handle the situation that you are in with the other person.

Matthew 7:3-5 *"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."*

Remember You Are Accountable To God

You are accountable to God for your own actions. You cannot control what the other person does, but you can control how you respond. They too will be accountable for their actions, but not to you. They are accountable to God. God will hold you responsible for the way you act towards them. [Paul](#) admonishes us in Romans to realize that we are individually responsible for our actions and to not intentionally cause others to stumble and fall before the Lord.

Proverbs 28:13 *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."*

Romans 14:10-13 *"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any*

more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

Pray For Them

The book of 1 Corinthians is a book of conflict. Paul was having to deal with problems in the church. But he starts the book by saying he is praying for them. He certainly gave them the correction they needed, but he began with prayer. He then closes the book by asking for God's grace on the Corinthian believers.

1 Corinthians 1:3, 4 " *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;"*

1 Corinthians 16:23, 24 " *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."*

Matthew 5:44, 45 " *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."*

Sometimes You Must Agree To Disagree

Realize that ignoring a problem does not make it go away. One of the greatest missionary evangelists of all time, the Apostle Paul, had a disagreement with his mentor Barnabas. These two great men could not avoid a conflict. It is unlikely that we can too. However, they were able to deal with their conflict by agreeing to disagree on the issue. The Bible does not say who was right or wrong in the argument it just says that they split up.

As a side note, Paul later wrote that he wanted the young man John Mark (the cause of the conflict) to join him in the work because Paul could see he was profitable.

Acts 15:37-40 *"And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus: And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God."*

Summary: Treat People With Love

Maybe the best way to sum this all up is to deal with people in love. Love the unsaved in such a way that they will want to know more about your God. Love them so that their arguments will melt away. Love your Christian brother in a manner that will help him see how petty his arguments with you are. Your love may bring conviction to the saved or unsaved to help them turn to God for forgiveness.

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