

## **DIFFICULT ASSOCIATIONS** **(Romans 12:18)**

We all have had to deal with people in our lives that prove to be a thorn in our side. A difficult person, maybe a co-worker, a neighbor, a church member or even a close relative may be that one person we find almost impossible to deal with. How does the bible help us cope with difficult people?

### **Wisdom From The Jesus**

**Luke 6:27-31** Our response to difficult people should center on the examples from Jesus. Jesus surely dealt with many difficult people in His earthly ministry and never had an attitude of superiority, arrogance or dominance but always treated people with dignity and fairness.

**Matthew 19:30** It is many times very hard to put ourselves down and put others before us but God wants us to understand His desire for us to be servants in every situation. We can do it with His help.

**Matthew 5:41** Jesus said we are to go the extra mile if that is what it will take to have peace. It is a sign of maturity and a show of wisdom not a sign of weakness when we yield to one who is stubborn.

**Luke 6:31-36** The 'Golden Rule' goes a lot further than we like to think. Jesus not only tells us to do unto others as we would like them to do unto us but spells out how to deal with very difficult people.

### **Wisdom From The Scriptures**

***What our motives should be*** – **Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:18** Regardless of how people treat us, we are to make every effort to have peaceable relations with them and show spiritual leadership.

**Matthew 5:9; Romans 14:19** The bible makes it clear that those that seek to have peace are to use every avenue at their disposal to create peace and those that do are blessed of God.

**Philippians 2:3-4; James 3:17-18** The opposite of conceit and selfishness is humility. Humility is necessary to properly deal with immature, difficult people. We want others to be patient with us so God wants us to show patience to them first and to always put others first. This helps us to grow in Christ.

**Romans 12:17-21** It is never the right thing to do when we try to get even with someone who mistreats us in any way. As hard as it is, we must depend on God to make all things right for us.

***Dealing with one who needs their own way*** – **Genesis 13:6-11** Abraham was a great example of always seeking peace. Abraham was the elder, he was the man of God. In all fairness he should have had first choice on where to live. Abraham knew that God would bless him because of his wisdom.

**Proverbs 17:27-28** Whenever possible avoid confrontation. If we need to be present in a potential stressful encounter we should say as few words as possible in order to keep from provoking others.

**Matthew 5:43-48** Even though it goes hard against our human nature, God says to pray for those who will continue to take advantage of us and use us. Put the situation in God's hands to correct.

***Dealing with one who argues*** – **Proverbs 13:10** Difficult people usually have their mind made up that they are always right. They like to make themselves look superior by making detrimental comments about others. It is generally best not to continue the discussion or give a polite answer.

**Proverbs 26:4-5** Sometimes it is best to let an argumentative person blow off steam and do not even give a response. Certainly, do not give an answer that will enlarge an already out of control issue.

**Proverbs 15:1; 22:24-25** Oftentimes when someone is loud and angry, answering in a soft tone will calm things down. If we answer with the same loud tone things may only escalate. Stay away from loud and angry people because their attitude could rub off on you.

***Keys to living in peace with difficult people*** – **Psalms 119:165; Proverbs 16:7** Obeying God's word is the key to living in peace. When we study God's word and learn the ways of peace we will not always make people like us but we will please God and that is what really matters.