

A Good Rule for Dealing with Difficult People

*"You Can Do **Hard Things**"* Series- Part 03

Share/Connect time: Are you a good friend? In your opinion, what is the key to being a "good friend"?

We all know a difficult person:

Author David Brown in his book, *"The Art and Science of Dealing With Difficult People"* states that there are different categories of difficult people. Here's the list:

Perfectionist	Shapers or Drivers
Control Freaks	Creative people
Aggressive or defensive people.	Submissive people.

Discuss how each of these individuals could be difficult to deal with?

With which of the above individuals do you have the most trouble?

Review: Pastor Brandon shared great advice for dealing with difficult people:

1. Find common ground.
2. Look deeper than the difficulty.
3. Love everybody, always.
4. Bless the difficult.

Today we will look at a portion of the Sermon on the Mount that will help us to build on and reinforce those above actions.

Book: Matthew 7:1-12

Mat 7:1 "Do not judge others, and you will not be judged.

Mat 7:2 For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

Mat 7:3 "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?"

Mat 7:4 How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye?"

Mat 7:5 Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

Mat 7:6 "Don't waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don't throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.

Mat 7:7 "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.

Mat 7:8 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

Mat 7:9 "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead?"

Mat 7:10 Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not!

Mat 7:11 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him.

Now here is a key verse in helping us to deal with difficult people (known as the Golden Rule):

Mat 7:12 "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

Let's get into the Word:

Jesus addresses a common problem among us: the tendency to judge the motives and actions of others. Look again at verses 1-5 and discuss how these instructions can help us to face difficult people.

According to these verses, what is the main lesson(s) we are to learn and practice when faced with a difficult person?

Jesus then goes into another aspect of our lives in verses 7-11. We have wants, desires, and wishes. What actions should a Christian take when he/she desires God's intervention?

How can difficult people affect our need to have our desires and wishes met?

What truths do verses 7-11 tell us about people's ability to rob us of what our Good Father desires for us?

The Golden Rule (verse 12) can be broken down into three action steps to help us to face difficult people: Here they are:

1. Know what you LIKE! That is, put yourself in their shoes, and ask, "If I was them, what would I want?"

How can this help us to cope with difficult people?

2. Do THAT to others! Knowing what you would desire, make a plan to offer that up to those you come in contact with.

Name a few of the "one another" verses in the NT. How would these help us to make a plan of response to others?

3. BELIEVE this is the fulfillment of God's law! This Golden Rule is a synopsis of all that God expects of His children.

Read Romans 13:8-10. How do Paul's instructions speak to the Golden Rule?

Homework:

If we want to get along with difficult people, then we need to plan our actions to reflect the way that we would want to be treated.

Think about a recent struggle you had with an individual. If you were to apply the three action steps of the Golden Rule, how would your response be different?