

Dealing With Difficult People

By Justin Morton

As a Christian, several things can be classified as hard. For example, evangelizing a lost friend or neighbor might be considered hard by some. For others, finding time alone with God is tough. For me, one of the hardest parts of my Christian walk is dealing with difficult people. I find it hard to deal with people when it seems their sole purpose in life is to make my life difficult. Whether it is a friend, boss, neighbor, relative or even a member of your church family, it's never easy to deal with difficult people.

The good news is that God's Word gives insight into dealing with difficult people. Consider Paul's words to the church at Rome when describing how the gospel should look in the life of believers: *"If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceable with all"* (Rom. 12:18). Paul told the Christians at Rome to live peaceably with all people if possible. Don't you suppose difficult people fall into this category as well? I do. Yet, even though they may be difficult, Paul teaches us to strive to live in peace with them.

Jesus had to deal with difficult people too. Some people opposed His ministry (Mk. 5:1-17; Lk. 4:16-29), didn't believe He was who He said He was (Jn. 12:35-37), and some even sought to kill Him (Jn. 7:1-25). It doesn't get much more difficult than this. Yet, Jesus preached, *"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets"* (Matt. 7:12). Notice Jesus said we are to treat people the way we want to be treated, not the way people treat us.

The next time you are annoyed by the difficult people in your life, remember how the Bible teaches us to deal with them. Strive for peace and treat them in the manner you want them to treat you. Situations with difficult people will always occur, but our actions should be pleasing to God and that's what's most important.