

LESSON 2

CONSTRUCTIVE CONFRONTATION

GALATIANS 1:11—2:21



1 How do you react when you see someone you love or respect doing something that you know is wrong? What should you do?



Read Galatians 1:11—2:21, the chart “Judaizers versus Paul,” and the following notes:

☐ 1:11ff ☐ 1:15, 16 ☐ 1:15–24 ☐ 2:2 ☐ 2:2, 3 ☐ 2:6 ☐ 2:11 ☐ 2:11ff

2 Who were the Judaizers, and what was their complaint against Paul? Why did their point of view make sense to them?

3 Why was the conflict over keeping the Jewish law such a big issue for the early church?

4 Why were Paul's credentials and the approval of the Jerusalem elders important in his battle against the Judaizers?

5 Why did Paul think it was necessary to confront the Judaizers so forcefully?



6 Why did Paul have to oppose Peter publicly? How would you have advised him to handle the situation?

7 What methods, attitudes, or principles do you see in these verses that would help in dealing constructively with dissent in the church?

Confrontation can often be awkward and harmful, but Paul was able to confront constructively. We can learn some important lessons about how to handle this difficult aspect of human relationships by looking at Paul's approach. First, Paul was concerned that others saw him as a person of integrity—a credible witness. Second, he was well prepared—knowledgeable, articulate, and focused. Third, he had a constructive purpose—to build others up, not to tear people down or build himself up. Fourth, he was constantly seeking God's perspective—divine truth must prevail over self-interest or personal position. When faced with the need to confront others about their words or actions, we should follow Paul's example of constructive confrontation.

8 What makes it difficult for Christians to honestly and lovingly confront others in their churches?



9 What would make it difficult for you to talk to others about their wrong behavior or attitudes?

10 What credentials do you have to undergird your authority to confront others on important matters of Christian belief or practice?

11 How do you prepare when you are going to talk to someone about a touchy situation? What could you do to be better prepared?

12 What can you do to make sure that your purpose is to build up and not tear down? What difference will this make in how you approach someone?

13 How would you handle a situation where both people think that they are in God's will?

14 What can you do right now to improve the way you confront others?

15 What can you do to improve the way you respond to others who confront you?

16 Whom do you need to confront about their words or actions? Pray that God will give you wisdom to know whether or not action should be taken. How should you approach the situation?



A What was in Paul's past that further strengthened his case against the Judaizers? What aspects of your past lend credibility to your witness?

B Why do you think the Jerusalem elders reminded Paul to consider the needs of the poor? Why do we still need reminders to care for the poor?

C What does it mean to be "crucified with Christ"? What does it mean to have "died to the law"?

D Review the chart "What Is the Law?" What are the helpful purposes of the three aspects of the law? Where might a person go wrong in applying these guidelines? How is the law helpful in your life?

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