



With: I'm With Stupid | September 18, 2019

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

It's been said about work that, "it would be awesome, if it weren't for all the people." We could probably say that about our lives too; that people can be difficult. The big question is what does our faith ask of us with difficult people? Read below to hear more.

Key Verses

Luke 6:42 (NIV)

"How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Discussion

Most of us, at one point or another, have judged someone else before we've even met them. We build our own perception of who we think they are, based on their profession, ethnicity, social status, etc. A lot of times, this can get in the way of building a genuine relationship with that person. And whether it's simply a perception, or a reality, we all have difficult people in our lives. But if we do actually take the time to get to know people we've convinced ourselves are difficult, we can build honest relationships and break down some of the false lenses through which we view other people.

1. When is a time in your life that you've built a perception of someone before you'd even met them? Why do you think we do this as humans?
2. Is there a difficult person in your life that you've worked hard to build an honest relationship with? What did that journey look like?

If we're honest, we can also be difficult people in other people's lives. The world simply works that way. We disagree, we have our differences, and we don't get along. And yet, we were designed to be connected to other people. We are built to interact with people like us, who make us better and encourage us, but also with people who are different than us, who believe different things and experience life in different ways. In scripture and in our lives, God consistently pushes us toward people we aren't very similar to. He tells us to go to the spaces that make us uncomfortable, to grow us, so we become more like him.

3. Why do you think God created us to live in the tension of connecting with people who aren't like us? In what ways do you think this grows us as Christians?
4. When is a time God has pushed you toward someone very different than you? What was the outcome and what did you learn through the experience?

In Luke 6:42, the Bible says that it's easy to see the qualities that make other people difficult to be around. It's way harder to see the ways that we ourselves are difficult. It calls us out on trying to fix or modify the behavior of others, without acknowledging the ways that we should grow and change as well. It's an "I know better than you" mentality that we all struggle with. Instead of placing the blame immediately on others, what if we took the time to analyze our own faults first?

5. How does this verse make you feel? Is it convicting? Do you agree?
6. When is a recent time you found yourself slipping into the "I know better than you" mentality, in regards to a relationship in your life? What do you think God wants you to see about your own life in the midst of that situation?

What's Next?

Even from an early age, there are bullies, difficult teachers, and sometimes difficult parents. As we grow up, there are friends, relationships, coworkers, marriages, and bosses, that can be difficult. We all have difficult people in our lives. Most of us are continually asking how to navigate relationships with those people. The first thing we should do is examine ourselves. If there is brokenness within ourselves, we should work on restoring that part first, before we work on the relationship as a whole. The second truth is that some people are just difficult. And if that's the case, we work hard on establishing boundaries with these people.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith and as you consider your important relationships, ask yourself these questions. What can you do to redeem a relationship that has to do with your own character or behavior? Or, if you need to be healthy and protect yourself a little bit, what are some boundaries you can establish with that person?