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How to Deal with Confrontation

General thoughts to consider when handling sticky situations

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How to Deal With Confrontation: General thoughts to consider when handling sticky situations

1. In hearing a rumor or report of another's sin, always approach the need to deal with it through the grid of grace. Acknowledge your own temptation, weakness and failures. God can't give us His grace to deal with a situation if our own pride gets in the way. Remember that we are all "sinners, saved by grace." Titus 3:3 says, "At one time we too were foolish."
2. Remember that restoration is always the end goal of correction. Humility on the part of the leader is a key ingredient. Galatians 6: "Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness."
3. Guard your tongue. Choose wisely who, if anyone, you should share with about an alleged offense. There is no excuse for being loose-tongued with your spouse, other leaders, followers--anyone. Time and reflection are important in order to diffuse your own and others' emotions. Proverbs 16:23: "The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds persuasiveness to his lips."

How to respond when someone confronts YOU

1. Look beyond the person's words to the motives of their heart. The method or approach may be harsh or unwise, but if you'll take their complaint to the Lord in humility, you may learn much.
2. Look for the truth. Even when 99 percent of a complaint is unwarranted, there is nearly always some seed of truth to be discovered. Our critics are often our best friends. They help keep us in balance.
3. Don't be defensive. If someone "comes on strong" with an accusation against you, remember that it is possibly out of their own insecurity. You, as an authority figure have a great potential to wound others easily and deeply if there is a lack of self control or wisdom in your response. Beware of taking a "you, you, you" attack mode in order to defend yourself. Remember that love delights to cover over another's transgression.
4. If you have difficulty receiving correction, do a study on the "wise man" who receives instruction. Proverbs 1:5, "Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance" (see also Proverbs 4:13 and 9:9).

How to avoid the need for someone to confront you

1. Make yourself vulnerable and approachable. Create an environment which encourages people to feel free to give input and ask questions. This will also allow many opportunities for you to teach principles.
2. Be humble. Freely admit, "I don't have it all together. I need you and your input." Recognize that you have areas where you need to learn. A threatened leader carries a heavy burden, always trying to cover over weaknesses to make himself or herself look good.