



April 30, 2006 (Vol. 6)

DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

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While we may wish that no awkward moments or situations arise, they still do. It may be that a brother or sister has committed sin and YOU are the one to see it. It may be that someone has come to you expressing concern over some behavior you have shown. Or it may be just that there is some question of concern that needs to be checked into - it may be nothing yet it could be sin. Whichever way it goes, we need to know how to deal with these situations and with one another.

First of all, we should all remember that areas of authorized liberty are not to be disputed and wrangled over (Rom. 14). Truth is still to be taught to the weak AND to the strong (14:14). Neither side is to use their opinion as the standard; rather they are to avoid judging one another in matters of opinion (14:3). In other words, both sides are to be gracious and gentle with the other. Truth is taught, but when God allows room for differences in practice (authorized liberty) we are to follow God's example and allow the same.

This may be difficult for some who are very opinionated - very convinced of the rightness of their judgment. If someone becomes contentious over opinions - thus violating Romans 14 - it can become serious enough that we have to practice congregational discipline against them. It is just as much a sin to cause strife and disobey Romans 14 as it is to commit fornication.

Next, we may see a brother sin. What are we to do? If the sin is against us personally, we are bound by Matt. 18:15-17 to go to him first, privately - and tell him his fault. We, of course, need to do this with love & gentleness. We need to hope for the best (1 Cor. 13:7), not assuming the worst or "surmising evil" (1 Tim. 6:4). And obviously we need to have Book, chapter & verse ready to address the issue. Understand that even with the best approach, they may initially react defensive or

emotionally. But be patient and try to help them understand that your aim is to help them spiritually - though at the moment things are upsetting and uncomfortable to discuss.

If, on the other hand, we are the one being approached because of sin, what are we to do? James 1:21 says, "receive with meekness the implanted word". Meekness is strength under control. It necessitates humility and lowliness and self-control. When we are wrong, none of us likes to hear it. No one likes to feel badly or be embarrassed. And sometimes we even react defensively - blaming others for the problem or finding fault in them.

Let us be honest with ourselves & God first. If we have done something wrong, no matter how uncomfortable, we need to face up to it. And if someone has approached us concerning our sin or shortcoming, we should appreciate their love and concern for our soul. After all, they could have just "winked" at this and let us go on in sin. It may have been easier now, but in judgment we would not think them so loving and kind.

And let us not hunt for fault, resent, or hold grudges against such a person. While we know how difficult it is for us to hear about our fault, consider also how difficult it is for them to address it. They get nervous & they struggle for words that will not make matters more difficult than necessary. When they hear and see us get upset or defensive - they may even begin to sweat with the stress and concern of the moment. They may make mistakes by choosing words poorly or by saying things that upset us unintentionally. We could let that anger us, or make us think ill of them - or we could be humble and gracious, seeing past their shortcomings to what they are trying to do and why. Again, assuming the best is what Christians are to do (1 Cor. 13:7), not assuming the worst (1 Tim. 6:4).

What about when something SEEMS to be a sin, but we are not sure? What are we to do? (1) Study the issue further yourself. If you are still concerned it may be sin, then (2) go talk to this brother. As Christians we are to be mature enough to discuss these kinds of concerns among ourselves. After all, we have the same birth, the same Father, the same Lord, the same hope, etc (Eph. 4:1-6). Things may feel awkward at times, but as we gain experience in the way of Truth - we will all be the better for it.

Just consider for a moment what elders have to go through. They are obligated (we all are, but

they even more so) to teach, discuss, guide & correct (Heb. 13:17). If we are not growing in this aspect - then we will never have men qualified to be elders, much less be willing to put up with elders who do their job well.

May we all be humble, gentle and assuming the best in one another. When someone says, "Brother, may we talk?" You may be nervous, but so are they. The unity of the Spirit must be "kept" and that "diligently" (Eph. 4:3). Then we may have the peace that we all long for - genuine, Bible based, spiritually sound & growing peace. May the Lord help us all to be faithful, understanding, and spiritually mature.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** – Sat., April 29.
- **Business Meeting** – Sun. April 30 @ 5pm.
- **Gospel Meeting** - Stacey Durham at Creekview church of Christ in Gallatin, Tn. April 28-30, 2006.
- **Men’s & Ladies Classes** - Tues, May 9 @ 7 pm.
- **Gospel Meeting** - Ron Roberts, Oct.15-20, 2006.

PRAY FOR

Mag Bumbalough, Greg Capps, Sabrina Capps, Thelma Cunningham, Donald Eller, Holly Jernigan (Joyce Gardner’s niece has cancer), **John Ross Key** (Mary Cox’s son), **Marci Miller** (Alisa Fletcher’s mother), **Monie Petty, Dave Poteet, Rose Taylor, Doris Williams, Wayne Williams** (Doris' son - stint in back), **Horace Jones** (Doris William’s brother, open heart surgery), **Ruth Williams** (Betty England’s niece), **Jillian Francis** (Terry Francis' daughter, preacher at Hillview), **Wanda Frazier; Robert England, Joyce Gardner; Ocia Bell-Jones & Charlie Jones** (Mother & brother to Doris Williams); **Sheila Eller** (Expecting); **Mia Godsey** (975 Briarwood Dr, Cookeville).

Those in Iraq: Jason Zelenak (Alisa Fletcher’s brother), **Cary Matheny**.

We Invite You To All Our Services!

- Sunday Bible Study 9 am
- Sunday Morning Worship 10 am
- Sunday Evening Worship 6 pm
- Wednesday Bible Study 7 pm

2006 May	SUNDAY-MORNING		5/7/06	5/14/06	5/21/06	5/28/06	
		Greeter	Adam Featherston	Mark Eller	Harold Frazier	Ralph Sims	
		Announcements	Anthony Rece	Michael Fletcher	Matt Eller	Anthony Rece	
		Reading	Larry Bumbalough	Ben Trute	Micah Eller	Jack Stafford	
		Song Leader	Ps 125	Ps 126	Ps 127	Ps 128	
		Opening Prayer	Harold Frazier	Sam Gardner	Kevin Blankenship	Chad Sims	
		Lord's Supper Lead	Michael Fletcher	Adam Featherston	Jared Gwin	Thom Steger	
		Lord's Supper Assist	Mark Eller	Anthony Rece	Sam Gardner	Larry Bumbalough	
			Micah Eller	Mike Tenpenny	Ben Trute	Josh Poteet	
		Closing Prayer	Jack Stafford	Ralph Sims	Jake Hale	Micah Eller	
	Chad Sims	Jake Hale	Mike Tenpenny	Ben Trute			
	Ralph Sims	Jerry Taylor	Josh Poteet	Matt Eller			
	SUNDAY-EVENING		5/7/06	5/14/06	5/21/06	5/28/06	
		Opening Prayer	Sam Gardner	Kevin Blankenship	Thom Steger	Adam Featherston	
		Song Leader	Kevin Blankenship	Harold Frazier	David Price		
		Closing Prayer	Jared Gwin	Josh Poteet	Wesly Geer	Wesly Geer	
		Lord's Supper Lead	Michael Fletcher	Mark Welte	Harold Frazier	Mark Eller	
		Speaker/invitation	Jared Gwin	Jared Gwin		Mark Welte	
		Group	1	2	3	4	
		WEDNESDAY-EVENING	5/3/06	5/10/06	5/17/06	5/24/06	5/31/06
		Opening Prayer	David Price	Mark Welte	Sam Gardner	Michael Fletcher	David Price
Song Leader	Thom Steger	David Price	Chad Sims	Harold Frazier	Doug Hill		
Closing Prayer	Doug Hill	Matt Eller	Jack Stafford	Jerry Taylor	Jerry Taylor		
invitation	Mark Welte	Thom Steger	Adam Featherston	Doug Hill	Jared Gwin		

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