

Responding to Controversy

Sermon Summary

This sermon will focus our attention on our basic response to controversy in life. Each person usually responds to controversy in different ways and many times we end up fueling the fire for controversy to continue. This sermon will focus on four basic steps that God has ordained as the Christian response to controversy in the world that we live in.

Four Steps in Responding to Controversy

Step #1 – Be Alert

1 Peter 5:8-9 – Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 – If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

- **Key Point** – The first step helps each of us understand that we will inevitably face controversy because we live in a fallen world where Satan is very much alive and active. God has called us to be ready for battle before the battle comes to our front doorsteps.

Step #2 – Forgive One Another

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 – If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

- **Key Point** – The second step helps us understand that Satan thrives on using our emotions against us. He thrives on the emotion of anger, disappointment, and hurt feelings to encourage us to make divisive decisions. If we desire to stop controversy then we stop adding fuel to the fire by learning to forgive one another.

Step #3 – Embrace the Promises of God

- **Key Point** – This main point helps us understand that when times of controversy, we are not called to respond with feelings of anger, resentment, or animosity because we are men and women of God. We are to base our response on that will of God that comes to us as we are consumed by the *peace that surpasses all understanding*, the peace that only comes from being in God's presence. We can only obtain this peace by understanding and embracing the promises of God. Two important promises are as follows:

2 Timothy 4:18 – The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Promise #1 – The Lord is in control and He will rescue us.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 – ¹¹“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹²Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Promise #2 – God’s plan = Prosperity, Hope, and Future

Step #4 – Respond as Ambassadors of God

- **Key Point** – This main point helps us understand that the only way to respond to controversy is by being an Ambassador of God. We are to be ambassadors by what we say and what we do. The following passage helps us understand the basic moral and Biblical virtues we should implement in our lives in order to overcome controversy.

Ephesians 4:29-32 – ²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Application

This week respond to controversy as an Ambassador of Christ. Pray about your response and search the Scriptures before you respond. Make sure that you are not responding out of an injured ego or a hurt emotion but rather out of the will of God.

Memory Verse

Ephesians 4:29-32 – Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.



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