

TOUGH PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

People are hard to get along with because we are all evil. Sin is in us and comes out through our words and actions. Sin separated people from each other and God...sin leads to only death. The simple fact is that we all sin.

DISCUSSION

Why do we operate under the assumption that people are never going to hurt us?

EXPLANATION

What is the worst you have ever been hurt by another person?

What is the worst you have ever hurt someone?

Are there people in your life who have hurt you (in a non physical way) that you have written off as lost?

Do you know of anyone who has written you off and no longer wants to have any dealings with you?

APPLICATION

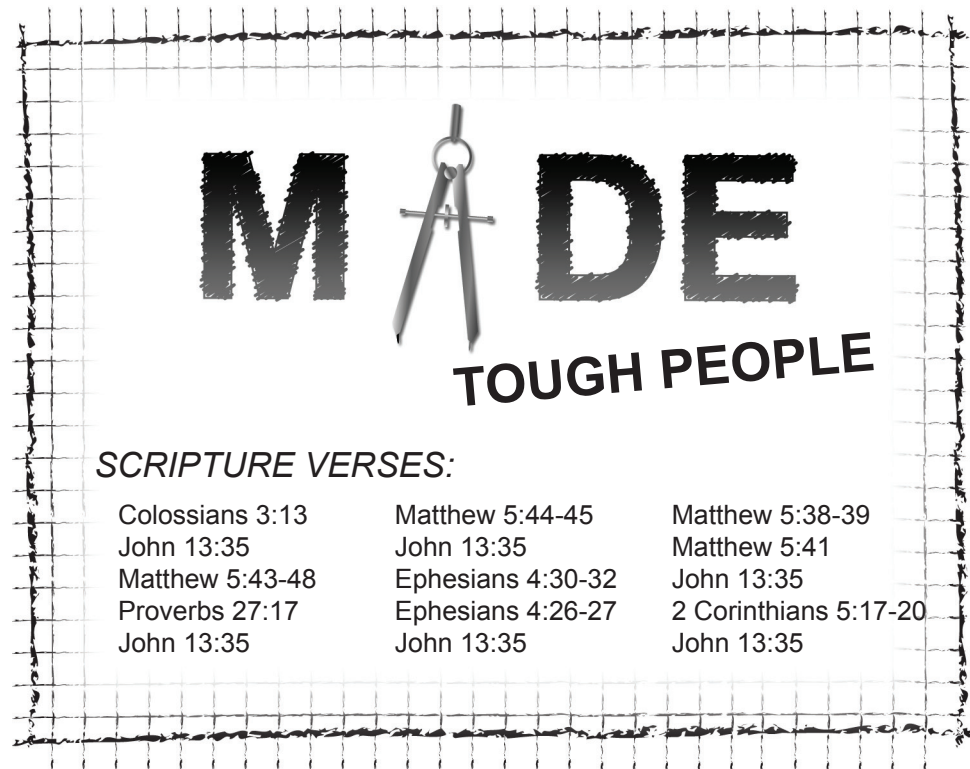
What attitude can you have that would be more like Christ in your dealings with other people?

What thoughts or attitudes do you have (that you have noticed) when you are around people you do not like?

How does that attitude play out in your reactions and conversations with them?

In what ways can you allow Jesus to lead you when you are in the conversations/relationships with these difficult people?

How can your attitude be made new so God is glorified by your interactions?



WEEK 6 NOTES





TOUGH PEOPLE

Colossians 3:13 "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

People are hard to get along with because we are all evil. Sin is in us and comes out through our words and actions. Sin separated people from each other and God...sin leads to only death. The simple fact is that we all sin; but the not so simple thing is we always assume no one is going to hurt us or sin against us. When people do sin against us we get bent out of shape and break relationships because we have been hurt and offended; but we never take a moment to realize that we do the exact same thing to those around us.

Jesus tells us that one of the greatest witnesses for the gospel is how we, as His followers, treat one another on a personal level. The truth is we all have difficult people in our life, but God can use them to help you become who He intends for you to be...He may even use them more than the people you actually like.

You may have asked "Why does God allow difficult people in my life?" Honestly, what other kind of people are there? If God were to get rid of all the difficult people in the world, if He were to remove everybody with quirks, flaws, ugliness, and sin, you would be removed as well.

How do we grow through difficult relationships?

• Keep Jesus as the center

We cannot touch the deepest part of another person. Only God can. Prayer is the closest we come to being able to influence people at their deepest level; between you and the most inner part of another person, stands Jesus. The best way to effect another person is by talking to Jesus. When Jesus is our center, we can begin to be less afraid of others and more bold in what God calls us to.

• Make a Choice to love like God loves

In tough relationships we need to be able to step back and let God do HIS work. God loves people who love Him and He loves His own who do not even love Him, yet. He doesn't do it because He has to. Love is choice and it is a choice God Himself makes. *John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

• Listen to God's Spirit

Anger is not bad, but it is also prone to remove you from who God calls you to be. *Eph 4:30-32 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.* God has wired us so that in times of intense difficulty we have a built-in drive to cry out, so that we would turn to the Spirit for help.

• Learn from the Master

Jesus never prayed for God to remove difficult people from his life BECAUSE if He had, there would have been no people left at all.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

God made you to be His ambassador, His child, and His representative all through the power of Christ. It is Jesus we must all turn our entire lives over to if we have any hope of ever being whole. That is the good news of the gospel, YOU can be made new.

