

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH PEOPLE YOU "DON'T LIKE"

Face it, we must be honest and all agree that there are people that we come in contact with that we just don't like. We must not pass judgment by referring to them as those who are "unlovely", because in thus "labeling" them, you've made it harder for your own mind to overcome this wrong attitude. We are all created in the image of God. Prov. 17:5 informs us that when we mock/make fun of the poor (less fortunate) we are actually holding that against God, our Maker. Sin has marred us in our image of God, however some have made it even more a shambles through irresponsibility and indifference. They haven't tried to "improve" themselves and cooperate with God's Spirit through the process of Biblical change. And so they are "cut off" and left out by you. Christ's ministry was the pattern for us to reach out to anyone in need. (Lk. 10:30-37)

What's left then, is to learn to live with them and love them. You can't change them and you only make yourself miserable if your unfriendliness becomes offensive. The Lord sets a higher standard for us in Lk. 6:32 by saying "if you just love those who love you, what's the difference, even sinners do that". Here are some steps that will be beneficial for you to apply when confronted with people you don't like:

1. Don't talk about them to anyone but God (don't judge, label, condemn, complain or criticize them. Jesus said what you do unto others is what you've done unto me: Matt. 25:40)
2. Maintain a Christlike attitude and response (II Cor. 10:5). You're accountable to God for you. (Matt. 12:36,37)
3. Don't set out to expose their faults or weaknesses. Be mature and overcome that by communicating only what's positive and edifying. Eph. 4:29-32! Your pointing the finger at them is only an escape from your own problems.
4. You must accept them and respond in love. Col. 3:13-14!
5. Confess to God your sin of rejection (I Jn. 1:9). Confess also to them if you've offended them. (Matt. 5:23-24)
6. Ask God's help in changing yourself (wrong thoughts, actions, attitudes) by replacing (putting off - putting on) the negative with the proper Biblical action! (Eph. 4:22-24)
7. Realize God has a purpose for every one's life and seeks to teach us through one another.
8. Look for the positive (character, qualities, talents, abilities, spiritual gifts ...) in that person's life and encourage them with it. (Eph. 4:29-32)
9. Go out of your way to serve them (Matt. 5:39-42) go the "extra mile" and do something helpful or beneficial for them.
10. Get to know them. We learn more about ourselves in the reflection of friendships and we get to know the Lord through the lives of those around us. Don't cut off what God wants to teach you through other members of The Body of Christ!

It doesn't work if we try to like the person first. God tells us to love them and then we'll begin to "like" them.

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"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

In the following verses you will learn what God commands and requires concerning our responsibility toward one another. Before looking up these verses, list on the back as many reasons as you can, WHY we NEED one another.

John 13:34-35  
 15:12,17  
 Romans 12:5  
 12:10  
 12:15  
 12:16  
 14:13  
 14:19  
 15:5  
 15:7  
 15:14  
 16:16  
 I Cor. 11:33  
 12:25  
 Gal. 5:13  
 6:2  
 Eph. 4:2  
 4:25  
 4:32  
 5:21

I Thes. 3:12  
 4:9  
 4:18  
 5:11  
 \*Heb. 3:13  
 10:24  
 10:25  
 James 4:11  
 5:9  
 5:16  
 I Peter 1:22  
 3:8  
 4:9  
 4:10  
 5:5  
 5:14  
 I John 1:7  
 3:11  
 4:7,11,12