

Being Agreeable?

I have seen an evil developing and increasing. The evil casts unwarranted doubt on others, destroys friendships and wrecks reputations. The evil is *wrong agreement!*

We love to have an agreeable disposition. It just *feels* Christian. Being agreeable also avoids argument, buys a peaceable reputation and makes it easier to be around our friends - they know we are *agreeable!*

To be sure, we should not be trouble-makers, in general... most of the time... when we can.. but *not at the expense of truth, not at the expense of another's reputation and not at the expense of our own Christianity.*

But isn't it "Christian" to be *agreeable? Sure*, mostly, when we can, when it is merely social. But in today's world it has become unfashionable and even considered gauche almost anytime one is disagreeable. Consider this, you are standing around the water cooler at work and someone berates a co-worker. Several agree on what a jerk he or she is and they all look at you waiting for the personal affirmation of your agreement!

You're on the spot, you can feel the hot seat. Agree or be an outcast. Agree or you're no longer in the *in crowd!* Agree or you get "cancelled," if not by Facebook, at least by friends. You *must choose: friendship or personal integrity... cool factor or cancellation!*

You are convinced the subject of the gossip is actually a very nice person. You know that person better than any of the gossipers and you know they are simply wrong and judgmental. Do you *agree* to be sociable? Do you *go along to get along?* You know the right thing to do but you also understand the consequences.

In the closing chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul gives a sobering command to Jesus' followers: **Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.**

Let all that you do be done in love. (1 Corinthians 16:13, 14.)

"Act like men, be strong." To follow Jesus' command of treating others like you would want to be treated, (Matthew 7:12), you simply must step up to the plate. *We can be and must learn to disagree without being disagreeable.* Try these:

"Truthfully, I've never seen that person be unfriendly."

"Maybe he was not feeling well this morning, let's not be judgmental."

"You know... all of us are out of sorts at times. Let's be supportive."

"Have you actually confirmed this negative story? I'm not sure it's true."

"Let's be more friendly to him/her. Maybe they're having a tough time at home."

(You can think of more.)

Reputations are tough things to earn and they can easily be damaged by a lying tongue, a hateful word or malicious gossip. **"You shall not bear a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness."** Exodus 23:1. (Psalm 35:19 and 1 Timothy 3:1-5 will add understanding to the challenge.

Don't let fear control you Be kind. Let all that you do be done in love.

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