

# NEW HEIGHTS

## DISCUSSION

### RECLAIMED

#### “Difficult People” Life Group Discussion

##### Big Idea

This week we wrapped up our "Reclaimed" series and talked about some biblical steps we can take to deal with difficult people in our lives. One thing in life is certain—we will experience difficult situations and relationships, whether it is through our unmet expectations, someone disrespecting us, or any number of other relational issues. We all struggle with difficult people and situations at some point, and it is easy to point the finger at someone else. While our flesh tells us the root of the problem is others, God wants us to come to Him and let Him do a changing work in us.

As we seek God, there are five biblical steps we can take in dealing with difficult people. First, we must overlook the offense from them. In doing so, we can look past the offense to what's really going on in their lives and love them in spite of the circumstance. Second, we must pray for them. While our prayers for others may not change them, they will change us and give us a healthy perspective. Next, we must also forgive difficult people in our lives. Doing so won't change the past, but it can change our future. Next, we must bless them. However counterintuitive it may seem, we must speak well of difficult people—our language is powerful, and we create our world with our words. Finally, we should do good to the difficult people in our lives.

While these steps may go against everything our flesh tells us, there is blessing to be found in our obedience to God's ways. Remember that the forgiven forgive—freely we have received, so freely we should give!

##### Read

**2 Timothy 2:23-24 (NLT)** Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people.

**James 4:1-2** What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

**Matthew 5:43-44** “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

**Ephesians 4:31-32** 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.

**Genesis 50:15, 18-21** But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said... Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said. But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

### **Little About Me**

Share a moment where you encountered someone difficult.

### **Discussion Questions**

- What passage above speaks to you the most and why?
- How do you usually respond to difficult people in your life?
- How can you respond in a biblical, healthy way to the difficult people in your life?
- How can you see past people's behavior to the pain and struggle in their life that may be the root cause? How can this change your perspective and response to them?

### **Prayer Focus**

Thank God for the opportunity to interact with difficult people and be a light in the darkness for them. Ask Him to work in your heart and teach you how to love others as He loves you and them. Ask Him for help in praying and forgiving difficult people and speak blessings over them.

### **Next Steps**

It may be difficult to start, but take intentional steps to deal with difficult people biblically. Doing so will bring blessing into your own life and set you free from the chains of unforgiveness.

### **Leader Tip**

Encourage your group to work on the relationships they have with the difficult people in their life. Share how you deal with difficult people in your own life and how it has changed your relationships. Ask group members to share their own experiences.