

# “How To Handle Pettiness In Others”

## *JOHN 15:18-25*

### SIX PRINCIPLES TO RAISE YOU OUT OF A WORLD OF HURT

The ultimate ground of the world's hatred and pettiness is an ignorance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know people who's main business is “SMALLNESS?” Do you know people who deal in the trifling? Are you ever in the company of those who insult you, belittle you, embarrass you? Ever bump into those who nit-pick, put down, or nag you on a continuous basis? This lesson is for you friend. Most people do not want you to succeed. Believe it. Some take an almost Satanic delight in seeing you fail and will try their level best to drag you down to their plane. Believe it. They will belittle you on a personal basis and even resort to a character assassination.. They have no regard for neither God nor man.

### **1. You win when you refuse to fight.** *Matthew 27:39-44*

Abraham Lincoln said “when you fight a skunk, you lose even when you win.”

In the 1960's, a Midwestern high-school principal ran for Congress. Rumor had it that he had had an affair with one of the young women teachers at the convention. The more he tried to clear himself the more he convinced voters of his guilt. The first reaction of many of us is to get the record straight. Remember that there are three degrees of civilized man: (1) The under-civilized - Ape like - fights with their fist. (2) The average -civilized - one who fights with his tongue. (3) The truly intelligent - the one who ignores it. See Matt. 7:6

### **2. Learn to laugh away criticisms.**

No one enjoys criticism. F.D.R. was the most hated and the most loved man (at the same time) in history. When you merely mentioned his name you had to duck or pucker, some one would punch or kiss you. But he constantly made more friends than enemies. In 1940, as he prepared for his unprecedented third term as President of the United States of America, there was an unparalleled smear campaign against him. He said, “I am very distressed at these accusations, Eleanor (his wife) is upset, but my dog Falla is pretty darn mad.” When you are big enough to take pot shots at, you are growing.

### **3. Make friends with your enemy.**

*Romans 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not.*

*Luke 6:26-29 "Woe [to you] when all men speak well of you, for in the same way their fathers used to treat the false prophets. "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. "Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.*

*Matthew 5:25 "Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.*

## 4. Learn to ignore the pettiness, in others. *Acts 14:19,20*

Some people delight in picking on you. They especially enjoy ridiculing the unfortunate and unloved masses. Lots of young people are severely and emotionally hurt for life. Words like nards, speds, retards, etc. still surface in daily conversations, even in a “Politically Correct Age.”

## 5. Be glad when you are criticized.

*James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*

*Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are you when [men] cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. 12 "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Peanut farmers, jailbirds and hermits are never criticized for making it big. The President is always the very brunt of every joke, it seems. The bigger the job, the bigger the critic. Those on the bottom of life's totum-pole will not be criticized. Most people chase a leader. Growth makes you a bigger target. You should be unhappy and worry if you are not being criticized.

## 6. When you are wrong, admit it. Don't try to lie or cover it up.

*Acts 22:4-5 "And I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.*

A. The story of Pickett's charge: He said, "I take full responsibility for today's total defeat."

B. When young Ted Kennedy ran for U.S. Senate it was discovered that he was expelled for cheating on an exam at Harvard University. He simply said, "I am sorry, I have no defense." This simple confession won him the election. How can you fight a man who admits he is wrong and admits he made a mistake? (1) He humanized himself. (2) It won him sympathy. (3) People thought he was honest by admitting that he was wrong.

C. A certain man was attacked and accused for something that he did not do. He said "that's OK, I've done a whole lot of things that I've never been accused of doing."

Why do people go out of their way to attack you? Why would people rather climb a tree and tell a lie than stand on level ground and tell the truth about you? What possible good could come from constantly criticizing someone else? They are totally dissatisfied with themselves. They are unhappy. Perhaps bad marriages, bad jobs, or totally unconverted which makes them dishonest with themselves as well as others.

### CONCLUSION

"You will never get ahead by knocking others down. The more dirt you throw, the more ground you lose. Cutting 6 inches off another's height will not add one inch to yours."

These principles are a vaccine against a psychological virus called pettiness, but will not cure those afflicted with the disease. Only the blood of Jesus takes care of the remedy.

The vast majority of people are petty (small, nit-pickers who embarrass others). Only a few are God's leaders and a head taller than all the rest. They will not engage PETTINESS.