

LESSON 8 // DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE—PART 1

Big Idea: In Daniel 1-6, we see four young men successfully navigate significant pressures. For Daniel this involved dealing with some difficult, evil people who sought to discredit and ruin him. It's valuable to learn from his experience because we all face people at times who seek to damage our lives and harm us.

> ***Daniel 6:4-5 (NLT)*** *Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. 5 So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion."*
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> ***John 15:18-19 (NLT)*** *If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. 19 The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.*
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> ***James 3:13-15 (NIV)*** *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.*
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> ***Proverbs 4:14-16 (NIV)*** *Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evildoers. 15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way. 16 For they cannot rest until they do evil; they are robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble.*

Start Talking:

How well do you deal with difficult people? What works best for you?

Start Thinking:

Read Daniel 6:3-5. What motivated the evil people who schemed against Daniel? How can understanding this help you prepare to deal with difficult people who might seek to harm you?

Read John 15:18-19. What do you learn from Jesus' teaching in these verses about living for Him in this world? How does this encourage and challenge you as one of His disciples?

Read James 3:13-15. Why is it wise to live with humility rather than envy, selfishness and other sinful attitudes and ambitions?

Read Proverbs 4:14-16. What are some practical ways you can avoid "the way of evildoers" in your life?

Start Praying and Doing:

Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you discernment so you can be aware of and respond in a godly way to evil people in your life. Seek to "overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21) as you trust God and depend on His power to make the difference in this spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18).