

# Donald Trump's Detractors: Resent, Rebuff or Reach Them?

Let's face this one head on. All around us are deeply distraught supporters of Hillary Clinton and angry adversaries of Donald Trump.

Engage family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances and co-workers about the election and you may stir up a hornet's nest!

We're observing frustrated protesters, hostile celebrities, disillusioned students, angry politicians and noted TV personalities refusing to accept the outcome of the 2016 election.

Like it or not, these people are experiencing real pain and confusion. Many have valid offenses due to Mr. Trump's pre-conversion, un-Christlike behavior and questionable remarks throughout the campaign. Others don't know what else to do other than lash out with inflammatory speech on social media or seize the moment with press releases and televised interviews, issuing threats and bombastic tirades.

- Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada said Trump is a "sexual predator who lost the popular vote and fueled his campaign with bigotry and hate. The election of Donald Trump has emboldened hate and bigotry in America. White nationalists, Vladimir Putin and ISIS are celebrating Donald Trump's victory, while innocent, law-abiding Americans are wracked with fear," according to USA Today.
- Filmmaker Michael Moore went to Trump Tower to hand-deliver a note that stated, "You lost! Step aside!" according to the *Washington Post*.
- Cecile Richards, head of Planned Parenthood, went on the

*Ellen Degeneres* show to speak about a doomsday scenario unfolding with Trump's win.

- In the post-election presidential briefing by Josh Earnest, the press secretary said, "Everything he (President Obama) said on the campaign trail about Donald Trump was true." Many recall the president's slam, "If you accept the support of a Klan sympathizer, the Klan, and hesitate when asked about that support, then you'll take that support when you're in office!"
- And if you thought you might get some comic relief with the oft-irreverent *Saturday Night Live* broadcast, think again. Totally out of character, the show began with "Hillary" (Kate McKinnon) singing a funeral dirge ("I told the truth.") almost bursting into tears at the end. This was followed by a monologue and skit mocking the president-elect and conveying racism was the cause of Tuesday's "tragic" upset.

### **As Obedient Followers of Jesus, How Are We to Respond?**

Recall the inspirational campaign of years ago where Christians wore flexible wristbands with the initials ? It served to remind us of our call to be imitators of our Lord in speech and conduct. When faced with a significant challenge, reflect on the method of our Master, and then proceed.

In our current cultural climate where there is increasing intensity of hostility and the opportunity, with the explosion of social media, to vent cruel, slanderous falsehoods and stereotypes as the "new normal" in our Internet age, what should be our response?

### **4 Divine Directives Contrary to Mainstream Culture**

The following four commands are directives, not electives in dealing with situations such as we find ourselves in today. They in no way imply that we act as wimpy "evanjellyfish" who are spineless, having no convictions or courage to stand up

for what is right.

Jesus Himself dealt with individuals like Herod by calling him a “fox” (Luke 13:32) and religious hypocrites as “serpents” (Matt. 23:33) and “whitewashed tombs” (Matt. 23:27). The key is emulating the spirit in which He addressed them, many believing He wept as he spoke so forcefully.

“I’ve always believed I should speak my mind to obnoxious and offensive people, and if they don’t like it, too bad!”

That’s fine if we “have the mind of Christ” (Phil.2:5) in dealing with difficult people. We should never be contentious and un-Christlike.

“But avoid foolish and unlearned debates, knowing that they create strife. The servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but must be gentle toward all people, able to teach, patient, in gentleness instructing those in opposition. Perhaps God will grant them repentance to know the truth, and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will” (2 Tim. 2:23-26).

The reason the “Bullseye Challenge” was released this year was to provide free videos and an accompanying book to equip us to speak intelligently and winsomely on the 30 hot button issues of today. Christians are equipped to be confident, informed influencers on today’s issues so we can engage folks with humility, mercy, kindness and grace. Churches, ministries, schools and families have been transformed by this resource. Take advantage of this tool!

So what are the radical instructions given us by our Lord?

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who spitefully use you” (Luke 6:27).

1. “Love your enemies.”

As much as I “try to live at peace with everyone” (Rom. 12:18), my Christian convictions cause some people to view me as an adversary. As much as I’d like everyone to like me, Jesus Himself said, “Woe to you when all people speak well of you” (Luke 6:26). This should never be a justification for being obnoxious, argumentative and mean-spirited, or not sincerely listening to people with whom we have differences.

We must “overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21) and express genuine love to people obsessed with tearing down Mr. Trump, no matter how belligerent or unreasonable some seem. And yes, sometimes this means smiling and simply walking away from a conversation.

Remember when the demonically inspired gang leader, Nicky Cruz, confronted David Wilkerson on the streets of New York in *The Cross and the Switchblade*? Nicky threatened David telling him, “I’ll cut you into a thousand pieces if you keep telling me about Jesus!” David replied, “Cut me up in a thousand pieces and everyone of them will keep telling you that Jesus loves you, Nicky.”

Shortly thereafter, the Spirit of God came upon Nicky Cruz, and those words convicted him, leading to his miraculous conversion.

## 2. “Do good to those who hate you.”

Confused and resentful individuals who hate us for our identification with Christ or this recent GOP victory, need to be on the receiving end of our understanding (scores are still in disbelief and shock) and the mercy and forgiveness of God.

Expressing some empathy with a simple statement like, “I can only imagine how you feel after all you invested” can go a long way as we truly “mourn with those who mourn” (Rom. 12:15).

We don’t have to necessarily say it, but in our hearts we

should extend forgiveness to these folks. If Pope John Paul can forgive his attempted assassin and Nelson Mandela can forgive South African leaders that kept him a political prisoner for almost 30 years, I think we can release people in our hearts for their support of pro-abortion candidates or vitriolic statements of our soon-to-be president.

### 3. "Bless those who curse you."

When I hear outlandish and downright wicked statements from people like Rachel Maddow, Miley Cyrus, Barbra Streisand, Jay Z and Bill Maher, my temptation is to rise up in anger and say nasty things to the TV set. Can you relate?

But before I fall, I thank God that the Holy Spirit usually catches me and prompts me to pray for them, which I do no matter how much my "flesh" resists. This honors God and releases His power to work upon their lives and mine in greater ways.

Years ago, my sister was crushed from a broken relationship. Her life went into a tailspin with alcoholism and overeating to a dangerous extreme. She resisted my overtures to love her to Jesus, initially making fun of my "religion."

As I regularly interceded for her salvation, I looked for ways to bless her in this dark period of her life.

As I took her with me on a vacation, found ways to practically serve her and simply demonstrated a genuine interest in her life, she eventually softened and was miraculously converted. She married a devoted Christian man and eventually became a missionary in a foreign land.

No matter how hardened some of the detractors of Donald Trump (and even detractors of Christianity) may seem, none of them are beyond the pale of God's love. Many of them were raised in the Christian faith and are prodigals, deceived by Satan. May the excellent behavior and prayers of true Christians bless

them and hopefully help bring them “home.”

#### 4. “Pray for those who spitefully use you.”

In our attempts to extend the love of God to confused and possibly bitter detractors of Donald Trump, some of our efforts may be rebuffed and we can feel hurt and rejection. May this not hinder our resolve to remain intentional in doing the right thing in the right spirit. Scripture tells us, “Mercy triumphs over judgment” (Jam.2:13).

Years ago my family and I experienced a deep injustice in a ministry in which I’d served for decades. An expose was about to be written in a national publication on this devastating experience when I felt the Holy Spirit constrain me to call a halt, release it to God and pray a blessing on each of the men.

I never will regret taking the high road at that defining moment in my life. The passage God gave me was from the oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job, verse 42:10. “And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

Here’s the deal: At this critical time in our nation’s history, we Christians are being called to be His “ministers of reconciliation” in bringing healing to our land. Make a quality decision that you will be part of the solution and not part of the problem, beginning with the very people He’ll bring across your path this week.