

How to Handle Foolish and Evil People

The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?" Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision, you circumcise a man on the Sabbath day (although it did not come from Moses, but from the Patriarchs). If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath day, so that the Law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry at Me because I completely healed a man on the Sabbath day? Do not judge according to appearance, but practice righteous judgment" (John 7:20-24).

Wise people are not the most intelligent or educated, but they are humble, godly, teachable, open and responsible. These people meet reality and life's demands by changing their actions and attitudes as needed to align with what is true and good. They welcome correction, invite others to teach them, and you can build a growing relationship with them by being honest.

Wise people also have empathy for others and consider more than just their own desires and feelings in a situation. Because of these character traits, there is always hope for a wise person to grow. The time you spend with them, instruction you give to them and investment you make in them is worthwhile because they personally mature and your relationship grows and flourishes. Proverbs 9:8b-9 (NLT) puts it this way: "Correct the wise, and they will love you. Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more."

The way to respond to a wise person is with more—more time, more discussion and more information—because they are a good

investment of time and energy. A wise person lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. You can trust a wise person and enjoy a personal relationship them.

We all have had the painful experience of someone wrongly judging us or not understanding us, and as a result, our relationship with them suffers or is severed. Additionally, we have all had the painful experience of thinking we knew someone and trusting them, only to find—much to our misery—that they were not the person we thought they were.

Jesus came to earth in large part for the sake of relationship, but even devout religious leaders were foolish or evil in dealing with Him. In John 7, they sought to kill Jesus rather than have a relationship with Him because they wrongly judged Him. Jesus then rebuked their poor relational wisdom, saying, “Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly” (v. 24, NLT).

To properly deal with people and have any healthy relationships, you must have the discerning wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God knows people better than anyone, and He will help you have healthy relationships. God wants you to be wise and seek wisdom so that you can know how to handle foolish and evil people. {eoa}

Mark Driscoll is a Jesus-following, mission-leading, church-serving, people-loving, Bible-preaching pastor and the author of many books, including Spirit-Filled Jesus, which you can order here. He currently pastors The Trinity Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, with his family. For all of pastor Mark Driscoll's Bible teaching, please visit or download the app. You can download a free devotional e-book from pastor Mark here. Click here to watch a video message about this article's topic.