



## How to Hug a Cactus

Message by Tim Perkins

3/24/19

*James 4:1-2; Matthew 15:18-19*

### Dealing with Difficult People:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ from them.  
*(Proverbs 10:12 CEV, 12:16 NIV, 19:11)*

2. \_\_\_\_\_ for them. *(Matthew 5:43-44; Psalm 3:7)*

3. \_\_\_\_\_ them. *(Luke 23:34; Colossians 3:13 NLT)*

4. \_\_\_\_\_ them. *(Luke 6:27-28; 1 Peter 3:9 NCV)*

*C.S. Lewis "Do not waste time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor; act as if you did.... When you are behaving as if you loved someone you will presently come to love him."*

5. Do \_\_\_\_\_ to them. *(Romans 12:17-21)*

## Midweek Small Group Discussion:

### 2 Samuel 16:5-14

When was your heart drawn towards God during Sunday's worship service? As Tim talked about dealing with difficult people, what thoughts or feelings did you have?

Read 2 Samuel 16:5-14

When have you been cussed out or yelled at? How did that feel? How did you respond – self-defense, self-pity, let it roll right off, powered up, or \_\_\_\_\_? In this story, how would you describe David's response?

What is Shimei's family tie and why would that have fueled his anger?

When Shimei wasn't cursing David, he took verbal jabs at David about his family. What is the situation in David's family that Shimei pokes at in verse 7? From verse 11, how did the reality of David's situation at home shape his perspective towards Shimei?

How did David's closest friends want to respond to Shimei's words and actions? What would you have wanted to do that day if you were a close friend of King David?

Read verse 10. Is David admitting that he deserved to be cussed and mocked? Why or why not? If not, what was David actually saying?

In verse 12, David suggests that perhaps the Lord will take note of his predicament and bless him with good. Have you ever had a similar thought when in the midst of dealing with a difficult person? Did it help you keep your head and remain calm?

Read Ephesians 4:31-32. Tim made the point that "the forgiven forgive." Can you list some of the ways that David had received forgiveness from God during his reign as king? How does recognizing your sinfulness and God's corresponding forgiveness impact your ability to forgive others? Even when we know God has forgiven us, why is it still hard to offer forgiveness to others?

What type of qualities must you possess if you are to respond to a difficult person as David did in this story?

Is it possible that God may want to use a difficult person to transform you into greater Christlikeness? If so, what area of your life might God want to transform?

Consider closing with a few moments of silent prayer. Allow this to guide that time:

- Begin by thanking God for specific times and ways that God has forgiven you.
- As you rest in God's presence, name the difficult person(s) in your life. (Again, this is a silent prayer just between you and God!)
- Is there a need for you to forgive that person? Ask God to help you take steps towards forgiving them.
- Additionally, ask God to give you a desire to bless that person. Admit that you need God's grace and supernatural strength to bless them; you are unable to do this in your own, human strength.
- Close by thanking God for specific ways He has been a blessing to you.