

TACT: Work on It!

A person who is tactful is able to say and do things in a manner which have a lesser chance of offending people. Some people are absolutely more tactful than others. All of us have had moments where we could have been more tactful. Over the years, I certainly have had my tactless moments. I know as I have aged those moments have become fewer and far between, but I am not immune to a lack of tact. Christians need to be careful that they are growing in their ability to be tactful.

A good brother delivered a fantastic live online lesson on Church History. The lesson was factual, contained a heart-felt plea for restoration, and was received well by a large audience.



Unfortunately, immediately following the lesson another brother in Christ decided to publicly challenge him on a divisive topic not addressed in the lesson. The example was poor. The timing was poor. No visible benefit was produced. What was conveyed was insensitive, unconstructive, and tactless. The good Christian brother with a lack of tact did not increase his influence in reaching others. Strangers are

not more likely to be going to him for Biblical instruction. Souls will not be won by his actions. What could have happened? How could the concern on the questioning brother's mind have been handled so that it did not reflect negatively on him, other Christians, and the Church as a whole?

Acts 18 discusses a man named Apollos. Apollos was mighty in the Old Testament scriptures. He was eloquent. He spoke about Jesus. He spoke boldly! Yet, due to his own ignorance, he shared the truth only in part and not in full. Two Christians, Aquila and Priscilla listened to his message. They had concerns. They could have publicly blasted Apollos in a tactless moment. They could have shamed their example and the Church. What they did instead was treat a good brother in Christ with respect and kindness. Acts 18:26, speaks of them taking Apollos to the side and helping him with the way of God. That is the art of tact.

Do we think of what we say and do before we do it? Why not take concerned replies to others into private discussion instead of disgraceful public squabbling? How often have you read on the internet or on a bumper sticker something to the effect: "I was at Church Sunday, not watching the Big Game". How many souls have ever been won by this approach? How many have been offended and turned away by this attempt to dump a random bucket of guilt on a stranger's head? The Puritans when they came to America would demonstrate how "pious" they were by multiple worship services on Sunday. When Christians behave with such tactless motives, they are simply trying to show how "pious" they are in comparison to others? I suggest they reevaluate the result.

Christianity is about a relationship with our God. While the Word of God ultimately may bring offence to many, the manner in which that Word is shared needs to be done with

kindness and thoughtfulness. Consider a few scriptures for further study on tactfulness: Proverbs 16:24, Ephesians 4:29, I Corinthians 9:19-23. I implore you, please keep your words under control, sober, and edifying, so that all those who come within your sphere of influence may be built up and not torn down.

Ephesians 4:15 – *“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”*

The above article was written by Travis Main and was originally posted at:

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