



No Growth - Argument

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes

2 Timothy 2:23

Arrogant - Proverbs 21:24

Righteous - Luke 18:9 e.g. 10-14

Grudge - Lev 19:18, James 5:9

Upset - Romans 12:19, Ephesians 4:26

Mouthy - Proverbs 13:3

Eyes - Job 16:9 e.g. Gen 16:4

Negative - Matthew 12:36

Taunting - Proverbs 17:14, Habakkuk 2:6

The argument is often a verbal altercation with another or others that stems from a disagreement: To convince them while presenting facts to support and gain recognition. However, the bickering could lead to a clash or go extreme as a brawl. Despite the potential dangers of an argument, responding to a question or a statement should not be deemed as one. Many people raise concerns over an issue with another, and the receiver replies, "I do not want to get into an argument." Just because a person passes remarks we disapprove of does not mean it is an argument.

Believers in terms of this subject are different. Followers of Christ are to avoid the kind of shallow, pointless bickering stated in verse sixteen of Second Timothy chapter two. The false teachers in Ephesus were examples of this kind of foolish talk. However, believers, this "irreverent babble" is a form of spiritual gangrene. The result of these value-less arguments is that they lead to more disputes.

Arguments set Christian brothers against each other for no good reason. Believers in the church ought to pray without quarreling, as in Second Timothy two verse eight. Elders are not to be quarrelsome. James four, one through two, also addresses bickering as a matter of internal sinful desires. The difference between defending important truths and bickering over lesser issues is a person cannot handle the truth unless they stay away from unspiritual battles. All these arguments do is fuel the flesh and do nothing but jeopardize the inner person and tempt us to behave ungodlily.

"Arrogance is when a person thinks they are better than everyone else." One of many ways an argument can surface in a conversation or discussion is when someone in the group becomes arrogant. The display of that behavior is a type of egotism. The arrogant person thinks and acts as if their opinion is as valuable as fact, as if nothing, even God Himself, is sufficient to change their mind. These people believe in themselves, presuming themselves more important than others, including God.

Genesis chapter eleven relates the story of the generation so arrogant that its people thought they should be in remembrance forever. They planned to build a city with an immense tower, probably as a way of claiming they were immune to another great flood in Genesis verse four, same chapter. Despite their egomania, God judged the arrogant builders by confusing their language and scattering them over the face of the earth later in verses seven through eight. Humility will come to all people, either by submission to the Creator or because of His judgment stated in Matthew twenty-three twelve, Proverbs three thirty-four through thirty-five. Human wisdom is no match for the sovereign Lord.

The self-righteous are another threat to entice an argument. This set of people can be very tricky and confusing simultaneously. These folks will claim it feels right even if what they are saying is not. Being confident, the righteous will think they are just, is still not the same as being just. They fight to be true: and fight when their opposition is right.

For believers in the New Testament, the Pharisees were a political-religious group that

appears in various verses in Matthew three seven through Acts twenty-three nine. The Son of God had His encounters with them, calling them a "Generation of vipers" in the opening verse. The Pharisees were either with the Sadducees, Scribes, or Chief Priests, monitoring Jesus Christ as He went about the will of the Father during that time. They watched Him and made statements to the public to impose wrongdoing on His part. Throughout the work of Jesus Christ, the Pharisees try to involve or mix up Him in Matthew twenty-two fifteen.

Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees and the others was a righteous battle. However, the difference is His is spiritual while the Pharisees are carnal. In Matthew five twenty, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." The Pharisees were a sect famous for their careful keeping of the law of Moses. They added layers of detail, rules, and regulations *on top of* the law. Pharisees were extraordinarily strict with their students and the common synagogue-goers about what it took to follow the law to be righteous. Here are some examples of self-righteous versus holy righteousness. Matthew twenty-four through twenty-seven, "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by, Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges."

A grudge is another way that an argument can generate. Hard feelings, malice, and bitterness are like cousins, all a part of that family. The conversation could be simply about everyday life, and because the person has that grudge, they will target anything you say. The innocent person on the receiving end may not have a clue as to why. The grudgeful want to hurt the one they aim for because it hurts enough to what is bothering them: they are better off

coming out with the truth instead of going the grudge route.

In Mark chapter six, nineteen, Herodias, the granddaughter of Herod the Great, rises to a prominent position in Rome by marrying her half-uncle Philip. Still, like many descendants of Herod the Great, she wants more. Her divorce from Philip and marriage to Antipas give her more than a life of luxury and esteem: it gives her power. The condemnation of her marriage from John the Baptist as unlawful threatens everything Herodias has. Not only could he incite the Jewish leadership against her, but his presence as a public figure also did not respect her is a problem. She grudge-fully will use her daughter to resolve this problem.

An argument can cause the people involved to be upset. Those who follow Christ have the command never to avenge themselves, to never "get even." Whether the hurt comes from fellow believers or unbelievers, revenge is not a legitimate option. How do we respond to this idea? On the one hand, we might be concerned that God will show mercy to those who harm us instead of giving them what they deserve. After all, He has shown great mercy to us. Is not that what God does?

The fact that a person is upset is not necessarily wrong and is not a sin. There are some things Christians ought to be upset about: especially if someone did them wrong, and not about them being the wrongdoer, which is a big difference. However, uncontrolled emotions could quickly lead to doing wrong, which is not an excuse to sin. One way to control our feelings is not to let them sit unresolved if possible. Otherwise, bitterness or the desire for vengeance can grow, leading to more sinful thoughts and actions: ask God to help us deal with it and not let it stay inside us.

What causes most arguments is a person letting the mouth run away from them. Especially for a believer, it is vital to control what we say to others. Doing so can keep a person out of trouble and even save his life. Those who threaten or revile other people open themselves to revenge and backlash. The person who speaks without thinking or control, makes rash promises, and does not keep, insult others, lie, tell secrets or offer

unsound advice, gossip or criticize others unjustly: using careless, harsh language will rebound to harm them.

In First Kings chapter twenty-one, Ahab complains to his wife Jezebel regarding the vineyard of Naboth. She convinces her husband he will have the land by writing on his behalf to the nobles in that city. Jezebel sends a letter that gets Naboth in trouble, and they stone him to death. What did she say in the letter? Only God knows. Writing letters of untruth and sending texts to hurt someone is just as dangerous as being mouthy to create an argument that will lead others to danger. The eyes could get us into an argument even if the words did not yet transpire. Each day as we navigate to fulfill our agendas, we encounter different people. Sometimes we come across someone that gives you that look or eye cut. If eyes could talk, "I don't like you" look without reason. Believers have to be pleasant and caring towards people of that attitude.

In Genesis sixteen, verses three through four, Sarai's plan to obtain a son, both for Abram and herself, through her servant Hagar, seems to be working. Hagar became Abram's second wife, and she quickly became pregnant with his son. However, this immediate pregnancy complicates Abram's family life. Hagar, now wife of Abram and bearer of his only child, begins to resent the woman who will claim that child as her own. Despising someone through the eyes is to look down on someone: arguments can quickly surface with an approach to others like that.

Arguments can surface between others by being pessimistic: and expecting a bad outcome. Having a conversation with people that think negatively can wear on you. "Don't worry. Everything will work out. You will see!" The fatalistic person replies, "No, it won't! I know it will not work out! I know! I know!" Even if that was the case, an encounter like that makes the other person feel bad.

In First Kings nineteen, verse four, Elijah became discouraged, weary, and afraid. After great spiritual victories over the prophets of Baal, this mighty man of God feared and ran for his life, far away from the threats of Jezebel. And there in the desert, he sat down and prayed, defeated and worn. "I have had

enough. Lord, he said. Take my life. I am not better than my ancestors." Not to say it was an argument between Elijah and God, but his comments could invite one to others on a human level.

Arguments commonly generate through taunting. A person could be conversing publicly, commenting good things about someone, and that same person decides to reply by trash-talking them without reason. The egotistic person desires to look impressive among others. No matter how respectful, reasonable, and careful the other individual decides to be, there is someone who seems to be the opposite of that.

An example of someone behaving and taunting another is in Second Kings, chapter two, verses twenty-three through twenty-four. "And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came two she-bears out of the wood, and tares forty and two children of them." Elisha goes to Bethel he confronts some young people who mocked him. When Elisha heard this, he turned and pronounced a curse on them, and two she-bears came out of the wood and mauled the young men.

Taunting can go to the extreme, as this did. There was no minor offense, for these young men held the prophet of God in contempt. These were not small, innocent children. They were wicked young men, comparable to a modern street gang. Hence, the endangerment of Elisha by their number, the nature of their sin, and their disrespect for authority became evident.

An argument can occur in many forms where most of which a believer can avoid. However, the unbeliever could easily be caught off guard by one of these examples. Arguments turn people away who are in one, while those who are not turn them towards to see the outcome. God expects His followers to be in neither.