

Premise:

The Bible teaches us that we need to have balance in a number of areas, but a lot of us as Christians tend to focus on just one thing or the other instead of having a balance. In this mini-series, we are going to look at seven or eight areas of relationships where we need to have balance.

Overlooking vs Confronting

If you always overlook things, that's a problem, and if you always confront people over everything, that's a problem. There needs to be a balance.

The Downfalls of Being Unbalanced

Overlooking too much

- Enabling other people to not grow
- Making room for bitterness in your own heart

Confronting too much

- Meddling with other people (Proverbs 26:17)
- Making the other person angry (or breaking the relationship)
- Confronting at the wrong time
 - Not all times are a good time to confront someone
- Being insensitive

The Ideal Balance

The ideal balance is simply to respond appropriately to each situation (which varies by situation). Here are some guidelines to help you choose:

When you should probably overlook

- If it is a matter of opinion, and it is not something causing you to be bitter
 - Or if it's something that is within their right to do and you're not bitter about it
- If it only happened once, and it probably won't happen again (unless it is severely harmful)
- If, for some reason, you don't think that confronting them about it will be good for them

When you should probably confront

- If it is causing you to be bitter
- If you think it will probably happen again
- If they would be better off being confronted about it

Things to Keep in Mind

- It's very important to make sure we don't get bitter
 - Do not get the sun go down on your anger (Ephesians 4:26-27 NLT)
- Don't bother to rebuke others over moral matters that are just your opinion (Romans 14:3)
- How to confront others well
 - Be gracious
 - Find a good time
 - Stick to the point
 - If you might be wrong, be sure to word it that way
 - Don't accuse the other person of being malicious
 - If it isn't something that is objectively wrong, it's just something that bothers you, be sure to communicate that. And be polite about it.

Being Gentle vs Being Firm

If you always gentle with people all the time, that's probably unwise. And if you always firm with people all the time, that's also probably unwise.

The Downfalls of Being Unbalanced

Being too Gentle

- Not communicating how serious the situation is
- Not Being effective
- The other person ignoring you

Being too Firm

- Causing the other person unnecessary grief (2 Corinthians 7:8-10)
- Losing the relationship (a harsh word stirs up anger)
- The other person not receiving what you have to say
- Being insensitive and not thinking about what the other person is going through

Things to Keep in Mind:

- In order to have the right balance in a given situation, you should ask yourself a few questions:
 - Does the person understand how serious the situation is?
 - Are they repentant?
 - Are they fearful that you are going to reject them for this?
- Don't act in anger; be gracious either way
- Don't guilt trip people. Don't use shame to manipulate.
- Don't communicate malice

Giving vs Keeping

- Galatians 6:10
- 2 Corinthians 9:7

The Downfalls of Being Unbalanced

- Giving too much/often
 - Opportunity cost
 - Not enjoying what God has given you to enjoy (1 Timothy 6:17)
- Never giving
 - It shows you don't care
 - Your heart is not where Christ wants it (Matthew 6:19-21)
 - You are not thinking about eternity
 - You won't be having the impact you could be having

The Ideal Balance

- The ideal balance would involve not giving begrudgingly, but it would still involve giving a lot as you are able.
- Take into account the 80/20 principle

Things to Keep in Mind

- If you're in debt, you shouldn't be giving beyond your tithe (Romans 13:7-8; Matthew 15:1-8)
- Understand that there are giving opportunities that are beyond the tithe, that are optional
- Practice the 80/20 principle with your finances