

Our Response To Family Who Would Differ With Us Spiritually

I am thankful that most of my family are of the same mind spiritually, a blessing that many others do not share. I hear folks all the time discussing *conversations* (or maybe it would be better to say *confrontations*) they often have with family members who oppose them on matters of doctrine. Family gatherings, that should be occasions for celebration, often turn into religious confrontations. No doubt, it would be difficult to have loved ones differ with you spiritually. How should we respond to loved ones who are not of the same mind as we spiritually?

To answer that question, let's go back to the Old Testament and see how David responded to his soon-to-be father-in-law, King Saul (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:5ff**). While this passage does not specifically refer to doctrinal matters, it does give us some insight into how we should respond to loved ones who may not always agree with us.

1. First and foremost, always behave in a wise manner (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:5, 14, 15, 30**).
2. Do what you can to bring a little peace and stability to an otherwise difficult situation (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:10**).
3. Be prepared for whatever they may throw at you (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:11; 1 Pet. 3:15**).
4. Walk away from a potentially volatile situation if you must and allow some time for healing (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:11b**).
5. Don't stop doing good to those that may disagree with you (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:13**).

6. Remember that the Lord is ever with you (**cf. 1 Sam. 18:12; Rom. 8:31**).
7. Pray for them (**cf. Mat. 5:44**).

Terry R. Townsend

