

## The Way of the Lord

### 25. Passive Aggression: An UnChristlike Response (Part 2)

Let's continue our discussion of passive aggressive behavior. It's very frustrating when you're with a passive aggressive person. They habitually resist input, they don't complete what they're supposed to, and they're often insensitive to your emotional needs. They're so good at protecting themselves that they dodge responsibility for anything in the relationship but make it look like they're pulling their own weight and are caring for you. The sad thing is, you can be fooled into believing that you're loved by a passive aggressive person who in fact is *unable* to emotionally connect with anyone.

Most passive aggressive people either ignore or minimize any problems in their relationships. They see things through their own deceived and skewed sense of reality, so they'll deny any evidence or accusation of wrongdoing. This means they'll distort what *you* know to be true so it'll fit their own agenda. Or they'll try to deceive you through half-truths that *their* version is correct.

It's important that you understand that there's a powerful connection between the stronghold of deceit and the difficulty people have in both recognizing and ridding themselves of passive aggressive behavior. If you've gone through any of our materials on demonic strongholds then you're familiar with this saying: "*Once a person is deceived, they don't recognize that they're deceived because they're deceived!*"

This is why it's so hard for a person trapped in the deception of passive aggression to recognize it in themselves. And, one of the more powerful symptoms of the stronghold of deceit is *rationalization*. When you rationalize something, you resist what others say because you want to *stay in control*. The passive aggressive person repeatedly tries to explain or justify their behavior, actions or attitudes. They present reasons which SEEM logical to them even if they're untrue or distorted. Their insensitivity to the emotional needs of others causes them to gloss over serious relational situations, even making excuses to justify their sinful behavior or attitude.

This description of rationalization also reflects the *deceived* and *resistant attitude* that passive aggressive people display. That's no surprise since the source for rationalization and passive aggressive behavior is demonic strongholds that influence your sin nature. Keep in mind that until the character qualities of Jesus are formed in you, you'll be vulnerable to passive aggressive tendencies that hinder you from reflecting our Lord.

We want to discuss what we think is a principal cause of passive aggressive behavior. We mentioned in our last segment that we believe a curse is *already* on this nation because fathers have failed to teach their children the way of our Lord. The foundational character quality that must be instilled in a person, and which reveals that we truly belong to Jesus, is our willingness to *forgive others*. Both Jesus and the first martyr, Stephen, evidenced this essential character quality when each exclaimed, "*Father, forgive them!*" Knowing how important forgiveness is to have a relationship with our heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus warns us, "*If you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you*" (Matthew 6:15). You may also recognize that forgiving others is one of our Father's stipulations for entering His Covenant in Christ.

A person's *UNwillingness to forgive* is at the root of developing passive aggressive behavior. Passive aggressive behavior is an emotional defense mechanism people develop when they are emotionally hurt and unwilling to forgive. Passive aggression often begins in early childhood and forms the foundation for resistance to take input from others or to follow through on responsibilities.

Passive aggression first begins with an *emotional wound*. A significant event happens that hurts the child's feelings, and no one asks for their forgiveness. This wounding becomes apparent as they begin to withhold affection, manifest ungratefulness, or repeatedly fail to follow through on responsibilities. As the child matures he or she finds it difficult to forgive others. If a parent or someone else in authority caused the pain, the hurt person will begin to resist or reject other authority figures as well.

*Ongoing resistance* and *failure to follow through* are obvious indicators that passive aggressive behavior has taken hold. Passive aggressive people often seek out companions who resist authority. Those in authority will find themselves in a cycle of *nagging, restricting, condemning* and often *giving in* to the passive aggressive behavior. The authority figure then seethes with frustration and resentment, which fans guilt.

This pattern of passive/aggressive development could have been stopped if the parents had *role modeled* and *trained* their children in the way of our Lord. They would have exercised a vital character quality Jesus calls for: to *forgive* and/or to humble themselves to *ask forgiveness*. Only *forgiveness from the heart* will stop someone from allowing passive aggressive behavior to take root. If you're an adult and realize that you *do* display symptoms of passive aggressive behavior, you need to forgive from your heart whoever hurt you in the past (Matthew 18:34,35). If you forgive out of *loving obedience to Jesus* because *He* commands it, *He* will heal your emotions.

Examine your heart to see if any demonic strongholds have formed because of your unforgiveness. Especially look for any *bitterness and rebellion*. Healing can take place when you demolish the demonic strongholds that are influencing the passive aggressive behavior. And it's your biblical responsibility to *repent* of any sinful attitudes you have against the person who offended you, and to *pray on their behalf*. (Matthew 5:44). Be open to the help of others who can point out to you if any toxic attitudes remain that only Jesus can heal.

We'd like to conclude this segment with two observations we've made over the years concerning passive aggression. If you're a *left-handed male* or have a close relationship with one, be aware that most lefties will have a harder time ridding themselves of passive aggression. Left-handed men rely more on the right side of their brain, the emotional side. When wounding occurs they're more likely to be imprisoned by that painful emotion than a right-handed man is. They may hide their pain deep inside and refuse to reflect on the past because of the pain they experienced then. These men need the purposeful intervention of others who care, and the willingness to be confronted as a brother in Christ so that Jesus can heal their emotions.

What Mike shared about left-handed men goes for many divorced women and daughters of divorced women, as I am. Your emotional scars may prevent you from even *wanting* to deal with your past hurts. So you manifest passive aggressive symptoms, especially *control* and *independent resistance*. Through subtle manipulation

you'll do anything to stay in control. A curse passed down to us women from Eve is our desire to resist male authority. Passive aggressive behavior feeds right into this relationship destroyer. And sadly, many divorced women who were once Christian end up Buddhist, because that false religion makes no demands on them and leaves them feeling in control.

All of us in one way or another reveal passive aggressive behaviors until the character qualities of Jesus replace them. Ridding yourself of passive aggressive symptoms is one of the ways our Lord would have you *mutually* help each other be transformed so that *together* you can walk in the way of the Lord.

#### **For Further Study**

- Hebraic Article: *Mutually Growing Christ-like Relationships*
- Hebraic Article: *The Gospel of the Covenant Is the Pilgrimage to Salvation*
- Discussing How to Restore the Early Church, Lesson 37. *No Excuses, No Blame*
- Teaching E-mail 3. *He Made Them Male and Female*

Each is a free download on our website: <[restorationministries.org](http://restorationministries.org)>