



Wingman

Part 2 – The Art of Challenge

Study Guide

We all need a wingman! Often we find ourselves going down destructive paths either consciously or subconsciously. It is comforting to know we have a wingman who will see it and challenge us to make the right decisions. The key is not only having a person who will confront us, but who will also do it in the right way. In this study we will focus on being that kind of wingman and what it takes to master the art of challenge.

1. Challenging a friend can be difficult, awkward, and potentially have a negative effect on your relationship. Why do you think it is so hard to challenge a friend?

“Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you — ”
Philemon 8-9 (ESV)

2. **Read Philemon 8-9.** Paul explains his desire here to appeal rather than to command obedience. In the following questions, explore the difference between these two techniques.

- How is the relational impact different when you use a command versus an appeal? Consider what Paul means when he says, “For love’s sake.”
- Do you know someone that you need to make an appeal to? Discuss why and what you think you can do in a loving way.

3. **Read Philemon 10-12.** It is obvious in this letter that Paul has genuine love and care for both Philemon and Onesimus. Paul challenges out of love.

- **Read Romans 12:9-10.** Why is this kind of relationship so important for effective influence?
- How can you tell the difference between someone who is influencing you who really loves you and someone who does not? How can you show friends that you genuinely love them so you can influence them?

“...but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord.”
Philemon 14 (ESV)

4. **Read Philemon 13-14.** There are very few situations where we can make someone do what we say, so an appeal requires the humility to know it is up to them to decide.
- Why is it so hard to put the ball in someone else’s court? What benefit comes from recognizing that the decision has to be of one’s “own accord?”
 - **Read Ephesians 4:1-3.** What can you do to increase your level of trust in the person you are hoping to influence? How can you develop patience and peace as you wait for a response?
5. As you close, pray with one another specifically for the grace necessary to make a loving appeal to the people you mentioned in question 2. Write these situations down and follow up on them next week.