

The Hard Knocks of Mature Sensitivity

Introduction:

- A. *Sensitivity* can be used in very positive and constructive contexts.
 - 1. “Capable of perceiving with a sense or senses.”
 - 2. “Responsive to external conditions or stimulation.”
 - 3. “Susceptible to the attitudes, feelings, or circumstances of others.”
 - 4. “Readily altered by the actions of another.”
- B. The New Testament reinforces that it is good to be sensitive (*Eph 4:17-24; 1 Tim 4:1-2*).
 - 1. Husbands are to be sensitive in relation to their wives (*1 Pet 3:7*).
 - 2. We are to be sensitive to those who visit our assemblies (*James 2:1-4,8*).
- C. But sensitivity, like all human emotions, can be twisted, perverted and abused by our carnality.

I. The Fine Line Between Childlike and Childish

- A. Jesus encouraged his disciples to “become like children” (*Matt 18:1-4*).
- B. Mature sensitivity is a natural by-product of “*the meekness of wisdom*” (*James 3:13-18*).
 - 1. Apollos came to a “fork-in-the-road” when corrected (*Acts 18:1-4, 24-28*).
 - 2. Peter had a choice to make when rebuked by Paul (*Gal 2:7-21; 2 Pet 3:10-18*).

II. The Remarkable Faith of a Canaanite Woman (*Matthew 15:21-28*)

- A. She obtained the mercy that she so desperately sought because she was diligent and relentless. She would not let anything stand in her way!
- B. What will we allow to stand in *our* way?
 - 1. God has promised to chasten us, because he loves us (*Heb 12:1-11*).
 - 2. How thankful we ought to be when a brother or sister is caring and courageous enough to help us see ourselves more clearly and objectively! (*James 5:19-20*)