

PART 1: De-Escalate Before It Escalates **DATE: 07-03-2022**

START

There are a lot of mean people in the world. One area that this is really noticeable is on social media as people hide behind their computer screens and type out hatred. Meanness elicits a response. How we respond to meanness flows out of what we believe in. How we respond to meanness as Christ followers will show the world what we really believe about Jesus.

- Where do you experience meanness in your life?
- How do you typically respond to meanness?
- How does your response to meanness reflect your relationship with Jesus?

READ

[1 Samuel 25:8-10](#) (NIV)

“Check with your men and they'll confirm it. Please be kind to my men, especially since we've come on this day of celebration. Please give whatever food you can to us and to your good friend David.” David's young men arrived, gave Nabal this message from David, and waited for his reply. “Who does this ‘David, son of Jesse’ think he is?” Nabal replied. “Nowadays there are many servants on the run from their masters!”

THINK

Mean actions can come across in a variety of ways. It can be displayed through obvious hurtful words and actions, or it can be portrayed passively aggressively through vague games. Nabal's meanness comes through in his passive aggressive power play. Whether meanness is direct or passive, mean people are me-centered.

- How have you seen meanness as a reflection of self-centeredness?
- When meanness creeps into your words and actions, what is the self-centeredness behind your thoughts and actions?

Overreaction always produces destructive actions. Reacting leads to overreacting. When we choose to react instead of responding to meanness we will always make the situation worse.

- When have you overreacted and made a situation worse?
- When a mean person escalates, how can you deescalate the situation?
- How can responding instead of reacting help you gain perspective on the situation?

PRAY

“God, when I am faced with mean people, help me to respond and deescalate instead of reacting and making the situation worse.”

ACT

This week, work on your de-escalation plan. What do you need to have in place that allows you to step away and gain a new perspective on the situation?

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