

# GRACE BIBLE CHURCH LORTON

## **Hold Loosely: Accusations, Suspensions, and Judgements (part 2)**

### **Various Scriptures**

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Sin – our own sin and the offense caused by other's people's sin – remains a part of everyday life, even for believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. How we respond to the sin of others is a crucial part of our relationships, and how we love our neighbor.

Today we look at more strategies to help us loosen our hold on accusations, suspicions, and judgements.

Ten ways that we can hold accusations, suspicions, and judgments loosely. Not every one of these will apply in every situation but, for the most part, these are ways that we can glorify God, love our neighbor, and deescalate potential conflicts.

Review from last week...

1. Ask God for help to search out my own heart and motives (Matthew 7:1-5; Psalm 139:23-24)
2. Ask if it's possible for love to cover the real or perceived offense (Prov 17:9, 1 Peter 4:7-8)
3. Ask others for wise counsel (Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; Matthew 18:16; Philippians 4:1-2; Galatians 6:1)
4. Ask hard questions of yourself (Jeremiah 17:9; Prov 21:2; Heb 3:13)
5. Do not infer other people's motives (Proverbs 21:2; 1 Corinthians 4:3-5; 1 Samuel 16:7).

6. Be eager to win your brother or sister (Matthew 18:15; 5:23-24)

7. Slowly and gently ask questions of the person that you're accusing, suspecting, or judging (James 1:19-20; Proverbs 15:14; 18:17)

8. Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25)

9. Don't escalate the situation beyond biblical boundaries (Romans 12:18; 1 Peter 2:23)

10. Rest in the ultimate judgement of God (Romans 12:19; 1 Peter 2:23)

### Questions to Consider

1. Of the first five strategies that we considered last week, which one seemed the most challenging to you? Why?
2. Has there been a time when you were suspecting, accusing, or judging someone and you were *not* motivated by a desire to win that person back to a healthy relationship?
3. What does reconciliation mean? How have you been reconciled to God? What does a ministry of reconciliation look like to the world? To other believers?
4. Consider memorizing James 1:19-20. How can these verses help you in everyday interactions?
5. Start making a list of questions that you could slowly and gently ask the person or persons with whom you seem to find the most contention? How does asking questions help you to hold accusations, suspicions, or judgements more loosely?
6. Think about the last time you had a conversation with someone you were accusing. What could you have done better in terms of the content of your words (including truthfulness) and the tone of your voice and your body language?
7. Read Romans 12:18. There are times when the other person works to disrupt peace and to increase conflict. What are some practical steps you can take to live peaceably?

Recommended booklets: *Judgements, Rash or Righteous* (2009) and *Suspicion, How to Overcome "Paranoid" Thinking* (2018). Both by Lou Priolo.