

# CONFRONTATION

Challenging Others to Change



June Hunt



HOPE  
for the Heart

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JUNE HUNT



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Confrontation: Challenging Others to Change

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Dear friend,

Confrontation has never been comfortable for me. At times I've felt that I would rather have the "black plague" than to have to confront someone. However, over the years I have moved from reluctance to the realization that confrontation with the right spirit—to expose the wrong and establish the right—is a biblical mandate. Confrontation is intended to establish truth for the purpose of conviction, correction, and a changed life. Galatians 6:1 tells us, *"If someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently."*

In the early days of our ministry at HOPE FOR THE HEART, I didn't want to confront "Blake," a fellow staff member—but knew I had to. Blake was a bright, creative, meticulous young man—and quick-tempered. He would become enraged over problems like a jammed copier and then he would take his wrath out on certain staff members. Unfortunately, his verbal abuse began to affect the spirit and morale of others.

After requesting a meeting with Blake, I applied the "sandwich technique"—two soft slices of bread with the meat of the matter in the middle.

The top slice of "bread" was appreciation: expressing my care and concern for Blake, sincerely complimenting him on the positives he brought to our ministry.

"Blake, you know that I genuinely care about you, don't you?"

He responded, "Yes, I do." I was grateful for that.

Then I moved to the meat of concern: confrontation. “Blake, whatever we do at HOPE FOR THE HEART has to be internally true to our name. We have to give hope to our own family inside our ministry, not just to those outside our ministry.”

Now I had to address Blake’s angry behavior: “Blake, the way you treat other team members is a problem. Your actions don’t give them hope for their hearts. You are not helping them, but hurting them. It’s just not working.”

I reminded him how Jesus never placed projects as a higher priority than people. Then I shared my view of givers versus takers. “Blake, I want to say this to help you in the future. In life there are two kinds of people: givers and takers. Unfortunately, at this time in your life, I see you as a taker. I want you to go before God and ask if this is true. Realize, the Bible says, *‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’* Blake, I want you to be a giver. Throughout life, I want you to ask, ‘What can I give to others’ rather than ‘What can I get from others?’”

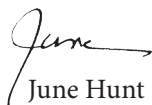
Blake’s pensive spirit indicated that he was absorbing every word of my concern. Now it was time to move to the bottom piece of “bread” in the sandwich: exhortation. I told Blake I believed in him. I knew he could be an encourager of others. I knew he could be a giver. I knew he could become the man God created him to be.

Not too long afterward, Blake took another position in Europe, and a year later when he returned to Dallas for a visit, he asked for time to meet with me.

Within the first three minutes of our conversation Blake said, “June, you were exactly right. I see now I was a taker and not a giver. Because of what you said, I saw where I needed to change—and I became determined to change. Thank you so much for telling me the truth. I had never seen this about myself until you confronted me.”

Confrontation: Expose what’s wrong—then establish what is right. My prayer is that you will have the courage to confront others when prompted by God to do so. I also pray that because of your Christ-like spirit, others—like Blake—may experience conviction, correction, and a truly changed life.

Yours in the Lord’s hope,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "June". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

June Hunt

P.S. This verse says it perfectly: “*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone*” (Colossians 4:6).



# CONFRONTATION

## Challenging Others to Change

*“Adam, Eve, where are you?”* The probing voice of God pierces the evening air, confronting the two pounding hearts hiding in the foliage. Just hours before, all was so perfect, so peaceful, but when they ate the forbidden fruit, everything changed. They chose to disobey God—they chose to defy His authority—and now they flinch in fear as they hear His voice come nearer and nearer.

As they step out of their hiding, how will God confront the guilty couple? Things could have been so different. He created this first man and first woman and placed them in a perfect environment where He planned to meet all of their needs. If only they had listened to Him! If only they had trusted Him! If only they had obeyed Him! But, because of their fatal choice, they forfeited His perfect plan. Now what will He say to them, and what will be His approach? How will He confront their sin?

For the first time, rather than being at peace with God, the couple cowers in fear at His presence. God responds with questions: *“Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”*

God turns and asks Eve, *“What is this you have done?”* Although God clearly knew all that had transpired in their lives that day, He chose to confront both of them with questions—questions to expose their sin and establish the truth—to expose wrong in order to establish right (Genesis 3:9, 11, 13).



# DEFINITIONS CONCERNING CONFRONTATION

Like Adam and Eve, most of us do not like having our sin exposed. Like them, we try to cover it up—to hide all evidence—in an effort to not “get caught.” Basically, we do whatever we possibly can to avoid having to face the consequences of our bad choices. Our preference is to figure out a way to “get away with it” to somehow “make it go away” or, at the very least, not to have to “take responsibility for it.” Assuming this behavior is natural and common to all humans, how do we deal with wrongdoing? How do we face our own “demons,” and how do we handle the demons of others?

Clearly, the answer is not by ignoring, avoiding, hiding, or covering up offenses. But what is the answer? If we use the way God dealt with Adam and Eve as our model, then we must acknowledge bad behavior, face the consequences of bad behavior, and make efforts to change bad behavior. We must expose what is wrong to establish what is right. That process is called “confrontation,” and it requires wisdom and discernment.

**“Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgment.”  
(Proverbs 10:13)**

## WHAT Constitutes Confrontation?

- ▶ **Confrontation** is encountering a person in order to expose what is wrong, with the goal of establishing truth; confronting what is wrong to establish what is right.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **Confronting** a person helps establish the truth for the purpose of conviction, correction, and a change of life.
  - The Hebrew word *tokhot* means “to correct, rebuke.”<sup>2</sup> Solomon, the wisest man, understood the value of confrontation when he wrote, “*The corrections of discipline are the way to life*” (Proverbs 6:23).
  - At times God will guide you to confront so that others can see their need to change as well as know what and how to change.

**“The grace of God. ...  
It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness  
and worldly passions, and to live  
self-controlled, upright and godly lives  
in this present age. ... These, then,  
are the things you should teach.  
Encourage and *rebuke*  
with all authority.”  
(Titus 2:11–12, 15)**

## **WHAT ARE** Five Methods of Confrontation Used in the Bible?

Most people are fairly opinionated about how God confronts mortal human beings in the Bible. Typically, people picture God as pointing a bony finger while pounding a gavel in severe judgment upon some puny human—but this is not so.

As our loving God created the human race with immense diversity, He also uses various and diverse methods to confront according to each individual's need. From questions asked of Adam and Eve in Genesis to His rebuke of the churches in Revelation, undeniably God uses various methods of confrontation.

The same can be said of God's anointed people. There are many examples in Scripture of God using His people to confront ungodliness through a variety of methods in both the Old and the New Testaments. Each method, whether direct or indirect, is used with the loving intent of confronting what is wrong and establishing what is right so that we will become all He created us to be. Such confrontations require a response.

**“My son, do not despise  
the LORD's discipline  
and do not resent his rebuke,  
because the LORD disciplines those he loves,  
as a father the son he delights in.”  
(Proverbs 3:11–12)**

## Method #1

---

### Confronting with a Question (Indirect)

#### Job chapter 38:1–42:6

Have you witnessed the wisdom of those who ask many questions of others though they already know the answers? These intuitive individuals have discovered a powerful secret: Asking wise questions helps others gain insight into truth through inner reflection. In the Bible, Job begins reflecting on his wrong thinking, *knowing* that God will confront him.

**“What will I do when God confronts me?  
What will I answer when called to account?”  
(Job 31:14)**

- ▶ **The purpose of wise questioning** is to get people to think seriously about their attitudes and actions, to rethink their thoughts and reconsider their conclusions, to acknowledge their actions and examine their intentions. This method of confrontation is less about a question to evoke an answer and more about a challenge to evoke a change.
- ▶ **The power of wise questioning** is used by the Lord God Almighty.

In all literature, the most dramatic example of wise questioning is found in the book of Job. Job begins to doubt God’s goodness. In turn, God begins His inquisition of Job with this question, *“Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me”* (Job 38:2–3).

- Pertinent questions can be powerful. Through one question after another—literally 72 questions—God reveals His very nature to Job.
  - Pertinent questions can be convicting. After hearing God’s questions, Job is so deeply moved with conviction that he says, “*I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes*” (Job 42:6).
- ▶ **The skill of wise questioning** is used by wise counselors.

If you are one who understands and uses this technique, you have learned an essential counseling skill. God, our ultimate Counselor, demonstrates throughout Scripture that questions effectively draw others out to think about themselves and to think for themselves.

Some questions that appeal to the conscience are:

- “Do you want to live your life with true contentment?”
- “Do you want to be a person of total integrity?”
- “Do you want to fulfill God’s purpose for your life?”
- “Do you want to have God’s blessing on your life?”

*“The purposes of a man’s heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.”*  
(Proverbs 20:5)

## Method #2

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### Confronting with a Parable (Indirect)

#### Luke 20:9–19

Parables have long been recognized as food for thought and refreshing nourishment for the soul. Simple parables appeal to people of all ages— young and old alike. No wonder these memorable allegories have passed the test of time to remain classic lessons through the centuries.

- ▶ A **parable** is a short, fictitious illustration—a parable in Scripture is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning—focusing on one moral or spiritual truth.
- ▶ The Greek word *parabole* means comparison or illustration.<sup>3</sup> The parable, when used in Scripture, illustrates a moral or spiritual truth by using simple, everyday objects and settings.
- ▶ A parable shines a probing light on the darkness within our hearts and challenges us to change. Parables can have unending value in developing godly character in our lives.

A parable of a vineyard owner was used by Jesus to expose the dark motives within the hearts of Jewish leaders—the Scribes and Pharisees (Luke 20:9–19).

The owner of a vineyard rents out his land. At harvest time, the owner sends one servant after another to obtain some of the fruit; however, the tenants treat each servant shamefully. When the owner sends his beloved son, the tenants plot and kill him. Then Jesus said, “*What then will the*