

Sunday, Oct. 28:

Memory Verse:

Message Title: Join the Rebellion: The Real Star Wars! “Man, He’s Annoying!”

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:23-26

Blurb: You know that annoying person, the one who always sets you on edge? You try to steer clear of him. You make yourself busy when she comes around. But God wants you to make a connection with that person. God is sending you to be a light to him or her. This Sunday we’ll learn how to see God in those people we want to avoid. It’s time to change your view!

Text/Memory Verse: Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

Opening Song: *Build Your Kingdom Here* -Sanctify

Welcome: -Pastor David

Memory Verse:

Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

Worship Music Set: - Sanctify

10,000 Reasons

Blest Be the Tie that Binds

Different

Worship Prayer - Rebekah

Offering: -Kelsey Reiling

Serve Moment: Trunk-or-Treat

Pastor Appreciation: Gina Lindholm

Kid’s Lesson: - Andrew

Prayers: -Andrew

Message Bumper (30 seconds)

PP#1: Join the Rebellion: The Real Star Wars

Man, He’s Annoying!

Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

This is our final message in our Star Wars series. There is a galactic war going on, between good and evil. Yesterday we saw it again break out into our physical reality, in the shooting at the synagogue in Pittsburgh. Horrific. Please, pray for the victims and their families.

We are always in danger of being targeted by evil, sometime even physically. So, we need to be constantly ready. That means staying right with Jesus, nurturing our relationship with Him every day. That means being willing to be used by Him to make a difference in our world.

Sometimes we think of this in terms of big moments, like being ready to tell someone about Jesus, like praying through a spiritual attack, like defending God when people say that shootings like this prove there is no God.

But today, I want us to take this galactic fight right down into the normal, everyday life that we live constantly. How do we deal with the people that God places around us, and here I mean, the annoying ones? And the Star Wars movies again provide an excellent illustration for Jesus-followers.

Like some of you, I was excited that when George Lucas finally set out to release a second trilogy of Star Wars movies. I had grow up with the first three movies, and all those iconic characters.

Then, in 1999, George released a fourth Star Wars movie, *The Phantom Menace*. In the new movies, he describes what happened before what happened in the movies I grew up with. I first met Darth Vader as the evil guy. In these new movies, George Lucas told the story of how Anakin Skywalker became Darth Vader, as a boy, a teen, and a young adult. I was so excited when this new movie came out. New plot lines, more story twists, and new characters.

PP#2: *Image of screenshot of “25 reasons you want to force choke Jar Jar Binks.”*

The movie was a wild success. But there was one new character George Lucas introduced, that I instantly hated! It was an Gungan named Jar Jar Binks. And I’m not alone! In all the lists of annoying Star Wars characters, Jar Jar is either listed close to, or at, the very top. Lucas wanted him to be a silly character to entertain kids, with a kind of clumsy stupidity that brought slapstick humor, and strange speech. But Jar Jar became universally hated as a character.

What is interesting is that not only is Jar Jar annoying to the movie audience, but Lucas cast his character also as annoying the other characters within the movie. He is irritating right from the start, when young Obi Wan Kenobi and his Jedi mentor Qui Gon, first meet him. Take a look.

Video Clip: Qui Gon & Kenobi Meet Jar Jar [1080p] (2:03 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMZHBeaMmME>

So, did you hear he said that he was banished from his own city because he was a clumsy, incompetent idiot? That’s a clue! Over and over again we see him cause messes and get into bumbling trouble. For example, here’s a clip from when he tries to help on the pod racers.

Video Clip: Jar Jar Binks Sticks Hand Into Podracer And Gets Shredded

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hAAqHFCleI> (1:46 minutes, stop at 1:00 min.)

PP#3: *Jar Jar Binks addressing the Republic Senate*

George Lucas knew the he cast the character so silly, that no one would suspect him of anything important. So, at one point, he considered making Jar Jar Binks the mysterious evil

emperor. In the original three movies, we never really got to see or know who the Evil Emperor was. He was always wearing a hood. So, Lucas had to decide which character would become the Evil Emperor. And at one point, he considered Jar Jar Binks, because no one would have suspected.

But, in the end, Lucas developed the character of Senator Palpatine to become the Evil Emperor. But in a climactic moment in the series, Lucas had the character of Jar Jar Binks manipulated by Palpatine to nominate to the Galactic Republic Senate that Palpatine receive emergency executive powers. Palpatine then used this power to take over the Republic and make it his Evil Empire.

There are just so many reasons to not like Jar Jar Binks! But through him, Star Wars gives us an excellent example of how we encounter annoying people in our real daily lives. This is where our faith meets the road! This is how we live out the galactic battle between good and evil right in our routine lives.

And so, for us today, Jar Jar Binks makes us ask the question: What do Jesus-followers do with people who make us say, “Man, He’s Annoying!”

PP#4: *Image for annoying people.*

Being a Jesus follower means that we live the way Jesus leads us to. And Jesus told us to love and respect others. Now, we can do that when we like those around us, or when we only have to tolerate them in small amounts. But isn’t there always at least one irritating person that we’re plagued with? Think about your extended family. Why does that cousin always manage to find where you’re sitting, and follow you around? Think about work. There’s that one coworker who seems to push every one of your buttons, every day! Or at the gym. You turn your head and mutter to yourself, “You just can’t fix stupid.” Or, dare I say it?, at church! You see him coming, and you brace yourself.

My father gave me some great advice as a kid. If I were facing someone being mean, or someone who just was so irritating, he would tell me, “Just walk away.”

Now, that’s not bad technique, and I still use it a lot. But sometimes they follow me! Or I have to work with them. And no...just for clarity sake...I’m not talking about my staff or church leaders. I’m making a general comment. And I can, because you know exactly what I’m talking about! You have these people, too! Heck, maybe I’m that person to you!

So, what do we do?

PP#5: Man, He's Annoying!

1. Don’t be that person

“For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.” -2 Corinthians 2:15

Well, first of all, don’t be that person to someone else! If you follow Jesus, then you are sent by Jesus to be a witness of Jesus to others. That means we have to take care about our witness. It requires self awareness. We can’t just go bounding up to others and barge ourselves into their lives. We have to conduct ourselves so that others want us around, want to hear what we have to say. Monitor yourself. Consider your words. Watch your impact. Have some self awareness.

In an almost silly way, this means take a shower! Put clean clothes on. If people take a step back when you go near them, you’re witness is not well received! Also shower what you say! Speak words that are gracious and upbuilding. Don’t be so caught up in making yourself look good, or

telling your story, that you push others away. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:15, “For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.” Be a pleasing aroma.

One thing I have found that I need to do, is talk less and listen more. I have so many interesting ideas and thoughts, and I want to share them all. But I need to control myself and make it not all about me, and more about them. I find it annoying when people make me to listen to whatever they want to share, on and on and on. And, since I have that tendency, I need to have the self awareness to ask them questions. Proverbs 29:11, “A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.”

But, you introverts? You, however, need to talk more!

Okay, so don't be that guy. Be self aware. But what happens when you are stuck with people like this. What do we do as Christians?

PP#6: Man, He's Annoying!

1. Don't be that person
2. Treat him like God's child

“God's slave...should be kind toward all people, able to teach, patient...”-2 Timothy 2:24

We need to treat them like we are called to treat all people. We are called to love them. In this context, that looks a lot like: R.E.S.P.E.C.T. Sorry, we've been hearing Aretha Franklin a lot since her recent death! But for us, today, in our culture, loving people looks a lot like respect. We may find them annoying, grating, irritating, or even just plain wrong. But we must still treat them like they deserve as God's children. We don't treat them like their actions, or words, call for. Some people deserve to be slapped! I do, sometimes. But instead, we make an intentional choice to treat them like one of God's children of sacred worth. After all, they are!

PP#7: 2 Timothy 2:23-26 (CEB)

23 Avoid foolish and thoughtless discussions, since you know that they produce conflicts.

24 God's slave shouldn't be argumentative but should be kind toward all people, able to teach, patient, 25 and should correct opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will change their mind and give them a knowledge of the truth. 26 They may come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap that holds them captive to do his will.

Turn to 2 Timothy 2. Paul is coaching Timothy how to behave as a mature Jesus-follower. In verse 23, he says, “Avoid foolish and thoughtless discussions, since you know that they produce conflicts.” Be self aware what you are talking about, and how it makes other people feel. Don't spew out what irritates you all the time, guard your speech, and keep it helpful and what builds others up. Now, this doesn't mean you can't be honest, or discerning. But share it in a way that is helpful, and not just venting, or trying to make others think like you do. Actually, we're going to have a whole month to wrestle with this. In November, our message series is going to be about how we love people we disagree with. So, a starting point? Avoid discussions that lead to conflict. Verse 24. “God's slave [now, that means you...we are slaves to God's way. We don't do what we want, we do what God wants. What is that? It means we] shouldn't be argumentative but should be kind toward all people, [should be] able to teach, [should be] patient, and should correct opponents with gentleness.”

We speak in kindness, patience, gentleness. This is how we are to treat annoying people.

PP#8: Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

Our memory verse today: Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” Here is the key to dealing with annoying people. Be humble. Count them as more important than yourself. This will change your attitude about them.

That family member who will seek you out at Thanksgiving? Decide right now that you will like her. That coworker who will constantly mess you up tomorrow at work? Choose ahead of time to look for what is good in him, what is valuable. That other parent on the committee? Start today praying for her, asking God to bless her. Operate from humility, count them as important.

There was one scene in the war against the droids, that Jar Jar Binks is a bumbling idiot on the battle field, in the way, and needs to be rescued. But watch this scene and see what happens.

Video Clip: The Gungans Retreat [1080p] (Jar Jar inadvertently takes out droid tanks)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZjBJYPeUwA> (1:30 minutes)

Did you notice? Although Jar Jar is annoying, he inadvertently takes out a couple of droid tanks! He does some good! He is helpful, and if you can look at his heart, you can see he is good.

Same with that person you have to ride with. Rather than focusing on what is annoying about him—because then that will be all you see, and you will indeed be miserable!—instead, look for what is good. Then, this is what you will see, and you will be able to treat him with respect, as God’s child.

PP#9: 2 Timothy 2:23-26 (CEB)

23 Avoid foolish and thoughtless discussions, since you know that they produce conflicts.
 24 God’s slave shouldn’t be argumentative but should be kind toward all people, able to teach, patient,
 25 and should correct opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will change their mind and give them a knowledge of the truth.
 26 They may come to their senses and escape from the devil’s trap that holds them captive to do his will.

Let’s go back to 2 Timothy 2. As God’s slave, we should be kind, teach, be patient, and correct with gentleness. And then look what Paul tells Timothy, starting in the middle of verse 25. “Perhaps God will change their mind and give them a knowledge of the truth. 26 They may come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap that holds them captive to do his will.”

Treating annoying people with respect and care won’t make them any less irritating. We need to realize that it won’t fix them, or improve them. We do it because we are God’s slaves, period. But, if we treat them well, then we may create opportunities for God to get through to them. Perhaps God will change them, change their wrong views, change their wrong behaviors. But we leave it to God.

PP#10: Man, He's Annoying!

1. Don't be that person
2. Treat him like God’s child
3. See him as a gift to grow

Proverbs 11:25 “Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.”

We can change, however, *us!* We choose to follow Jesus, and so the Holy Spirit comes into us, to work on us. That means we stop going around trying to fix everyone else, and instead, we go around trying to fix ourselves!

Now, this is not easy. We usually focus on what's irritating. We notice what is wrong. We have this tendency to dwell on the negative. Perhaps those annoying people are actually reminders to us of how negative and self-focused we are! Stop being so annoyed! It's not about you!

God calls Jesus-followers to holiness, of heart and life. Holiness is living the way of Jesus. And Jesus goes out of His way to connect with annoying people. He treats them as God's children. He loves and forgives those who hurt Him. He cares about the broken, the losers.

So, here's a perspective-changing biblical answer to annoying people: They are really gifts to you! They are opportunities for you to practice seeing all people as God's children. They are opportunities for you to practice humility and kindness, and patience. They are opportunities for you to practice laying aside your irritations, feelings, and self-centered way of looking at everything. They are opportunities for you to practice treating others not with what is coming to them, or as they earn, but as God wants you to treat them.

Proverbs 11:25, "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered." You see, we become holy as we practice holiness. How can we practice without annoying people? See, they are a gift to you, helping you to grow in your own holiness.

PP#11: *Book cover image from:*

<https://barbraveling.com/2012/05/10/how-to-stop-being-annoyed-12-questions-to-ask/>

So, how are Jesus-followers to deal with annoying people? First of all, have self awareness not to be that annoying person! Be a sweet aroma. Focus on them.

See them as God's beloved children. Treat them with respect. Be humble. Choose ahead of time to like them, to see what is good in them. Pray for them.

Focus on changing ourselves. See grating people as opportunities for us to practice our holiness, to live in a godly way, and to keep us from keeping it all about us.

Barb Raveling, in this book, says we need to ask ourselves 12 key questions. One of the most important ones to ask, she says, is what does God want from us as we connect with the annoying people He places in our lives. How does God want you to respond to that person? Then, she says we need to ask, what do we need to give up to do that? And one more: do we love God enough to do it?

Well, I guess it is about us. Are we willing to let God use annoying people to change us.

The galactic battle rages inside each of us. We are called to the Light.

May the Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.

Closing Song: *Living Hope* - Sanctify

Memory Verse:

Philippians 2:3 "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."

Announcements:

-Trunk or Treat

Benediction: -Pastor David