**Scenario #1**

* Drunk driver kills your spouse, or perhaps one or more of your children (an uncommon example, because this is an uncommon love).
* If there’s anyone we could hate, revile, refuse to forgive, etc., surely it would be this person, right?
* How can I possibly be concerned about their welfare when they seemingly weren’t the least bit concerned with ours?
* The same way as **Stephen**, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin” (Acts 7:60), and **Jesus**: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).
* Nothing evil about making sure they’re punished appropriately by the authorities, but what do we do for them going forward?
* Extend that same offer of forgiveness, write letters, maybe visit occasionally. And what drives all these actions is a concern for their soul. We’ll never reach them with the gospel if we cut them off entirely.
* They may refuse all of this, and in that case, there’s not a whole lot else we can do (may become a “pearls before swine” situation).

**Scenario #2**

* Boss at work has become entirely unreasonable, perhaps treating you unfairly.
* First, let’s be sure we think the way the gospel has trained us to think, that we think MORE about what we owe others vs. what they owe us. And related to that, be humble enough to ask the question, “Am I part of the problem here?”
* Here’s a passage that relates directly to this situation: 1 Peter 2:18-24.
* Clearly, you can’t retaliate in kind, but what you can do is discuss the issue with the boss in a frank, but respectable manner. But let’s say that doesn’t go well, that he holds this against you, treats you even worse.
* He might anticipate a little “drop off” in your work, right? Perhaps a lack of respect toward him? Here is where we “heap coals of fire on his head,” where we seek to overcome evil with good. We continue to work honestly, diligently, and with respect for this person in authority.
* And here’s a passage that can help us do that. Col. 3:22-25.
* What if it’s for Christ’s sake that he’s doing these things to us?
* This doesn’t mean we’re **obligated** to stay. It may become such an untenable situation that it becomes time to look for another job.

**Scenario #3**

* Your brother or sister in Christ has mistreated you in some way (e.g., didn’t check on you when you were sick, spoke rudely to you, shows little appreciation for what you’ve done for them, etc.).
* Remember the points made in the previous scenario, about being more concerned with what we owe others, and searching within for our own faults. That helps to temper any reaction we may have.
* Option: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone” (Matthew 18:15). But is it really sin? And what is my motive?
* What you **can’t** do is shun them, or just not speak to them anymore.
* **Nor** can you go around telling everyone else what they’ve done to hurt you.
* Ephesians 4:31-32.
* “Love suffers long…does not behave rudely…is not provoked…bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:4-7).
* Substitute **spouse** in place of brother or sister in Christ. Remember Matthew 7:12.

**Scenario #4**

* Your mother or father (perhaps both) were never what they should have been, and maybe still don’t treat you very well. And maybe their lifestyle is not what it should be.
* Do we not call them, or write them? Do we refuse to help them in any way, perhaps with financial or medical needs? Withhold good from them and your influence for the gospel will be greatly weakened.
* “Honor your father and mother” (Ephesians 6:2)—aren’t there ways to do that without enabling their bad behavior?
* We may not ask them for advice, and we may have to guard the children from their influence, but we continue to do what’s in their best interest—what will hopefully result in their salvation of their soul.

**Scenario #5**

* You’re on various social media sites, and some of the people with whom you interact have different views on the severity of this virus, the value of mask wearing, who was a good president and who was not, the role of government, the economy, etc.
* First, why do we feel the need to express an opinion on everything from A-Z?
* “Wisdom **rests** in the heart of him who has understanding, but what is in the heart of fools is made known” (Proverbs 14:33).
* “He who has knowledge **spares his words**, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive” (Proverbs 17:27-28).
* “A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back” (Prov. 29:11).
* The discourse on these sites (the back and forth) is almost always toxic (name calling, questioning of motives, my scientific “study” is better than yours, etc.). Don’t get down in the mud with them; i.e., don’t return evil for evil.
* As for rulers, nearly every one of them do something harmful to the welfare of our country, but that doesn’t mean we blast them on a public site.