Introduction:

Dealing with difficult people not only tests our faith, it also puts our Christian testimony on display. One of the advantages of growing older is getting a few extra years under your belt and having the opportunity to learn in life. I am of the deep conviction that unless you are learning, you're really not growing. The day we stop learning or the day we lose our desire to advance in learning, our life is basically over. The longer we live, the more we should learn. One of my life goals is to learn something new each week. I do that by reading books, listening to podcasts, or pursuing mentoring relationships with people who are better than me.

Takeaway:
One of the greatest lessons you can ever learn in life is how to deal with people, especially difficult people.

Here are three keys to being a good and wise people person:

I. Stay Committed to your Friends

The older you get, the more you realize there are very few things in life more valuable and rare than true friendship. I want to let you in on a little secret; all those people who follow you on Twitter and Facebook are not all your friends. One of the most important lessons in life that you will ever learn is how to make real friends. Solomon gives us some keys to doing that.

1. In order to have a friend, you must be a friend.

   *Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV) A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

James Merritt:
“Psychologists once asked a group of college students to jot down the initials of the people they disliked. Some of the students taking the test could only think of one person. Others listed as many as fourteen. The interesting fact that came out of this bit of research was this: those who disliked the largest number of people were themselves the most widely disliked.”

Dale Carnegie:
“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”

Five good people skills:
• Eye contact
• A smiling face
• Call people by their name
• Talk to others about their favorite topic – themselves
• Always encourage the person you are talking to
2. Choose your friends carefully

**Takeaway:**
Be friendly to everyone, but don't have everyone as a friend.

*Proverbs 12:26 (NKJV)* The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.

**Takeaway:**
One of the keys to friendship is not only finding the right people to be your friend, but also rejecting the wrong people to be your friends.

*George Washington:*
"Associate with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company."

*Proverbs 27:6* Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

**Two questions to measure a true friendship:**

A. Can I trust this person enough to be honest with me?
B. Can I trust this person enough to be honest with him?

**II. Stay Caring with your Enemies**

1. Face your enemies with forgiveness.

**Takeaway:**
Never wish bad things on your enemies. Always leave your revenge to God.

2. Kill your enemies with kindness

*Proverbs 25:21-22 (NKJV)* If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

**III. Stay Cautious with Fools**

*Proverbs 10:21 (NKJV)* The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.

**Takeaway:**
Only a fool stays around fools. "If you are not in the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong person, you can't do the wrong thing."