

Learn the Facts

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, once considered an acquaintance to be miserly, and, therefore, he had little respect for him. He felt so strongly about the man that, on an occasion when the man gave only a small gift to a worthy charity, Wesley openly criticized him.

Not long after, the gentleman paid a visit to Wesley. He was surprised to hear that this man – someone whom he assumed was simply greedy – had actually been living on parsnips and water for several weeks. The man told Wesley that, in his past, he had amassed a great deal of debt. Since his conversion to Christ, he had made a choice to pay off all of his creditors. Consequently, he was buying nothing for himself and spending as little as possible elsewhere in order to do so.

“Christ has made me an honest man,” he said, “and so with all these debts to pay, I can give only a few offerings above my tithe. I must settle up with my worldly neighbors and show them what the grace of God can do in the heart of a man who was once dishonest.”

Wesley then apologized to the man and asked his forgiveness.

Regrettably, it is easy to find fault with others when we don't know their circumstances or the reasons for their actions. It is also amazing how a few facts can forever alter our perception of a situation.

When we feel compelled to judge, it is a good time to ask God for wisdom and patience to understand the facts.

--Beecher Hunter