



STEPHEN MINISTRY

Assertiveness: The Right to Be Yourself

Christians are called by God to love and serve each other. Does that mean we should always be submissive to the wants and needs of others? Of course not! We cannot serve others if we have many unmet needs of our own. The current Stephen Ministry class has read and discussed the book Speaking the Truth in Love: How to Be an Assertive Christian. The book discusses three response styles: passive, aggressive, and assertive. Passive behavior means “not resisting” or “not acting”. Passive people let others push them around and do not act or contribute very much because they do not want the disapproval of others. Passive behavior does not allow us to move and grow as God would like. Passive behavior moves against the self. Aggressive behavior moves against other people, often causing unnecessary pain. Aggressive behavior can be physical, verbal, or nonverbal.

Assertive behavior values self as well as others. Being assertive does not mean being selfish or self-centered. Quite the opposite! It means living in the active, responsible way that God intends us to live. Jesus acted assertively in the way he preached, prayed, and live his life. As Christians we are called upon to love our neighbors as ourselves, not less, and not more. Assertive Christians recognize that each person is a unique, worthy individual created and love by God.

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