

# I am RIGHT and you are not wrong

By Keith Hartrick

Arguments are a huge problem. They can fracture families, friendships, business, and all kinds of relationships, thus creating long-lasting division and damage.

But why? Usually because both parties are convinced they are right, and the more heated the argument gets, the more defensive each becomes of their point of view.

For example, my mother and my older brother had an argument that led them to not speaking to each

other for fifteen years. Both were stubbornly convinced they were right and neither would give an inch to resolve their differences.

can be almost impossible to break down. Just consider how this attitude has played out in two of the most significant political results of the last year. We have all seen the anger and hostility of many people who object to the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States (and he continues to divide opinion, almost diametrically). Also, consider the anger and hostility of some prominent people in the Remain and Leave camps in Britain's European Union referendum in 2016.

We can believe that we are right, while at the same time accepting that someone else, who has a different point of view, is not necessarily wrong!

We should be able to defend our position in a gentle, unhostile, and friendly way. While we may be passionately and sincerely convinced we are right, can we not also allow someone else to believe passionately and sincerely that he or she is right? Does it always have to end in confrontation? Surely, sometimes we can listen rather than assert.

We need to have the wisdom to avoid getting into an argument with someone whose position is absolutely fixed and who won't give an inch. But also, we need the wisdom to know when an individual is prepared to listen to another point of view, and to be able to express our position in a sincere but caring manner. Admitting we are wrong is one of the hardest things for human beings to do, so let's be gentle with ourselves and with others who are faced with that same problem.

Love is expressed in different ways, one of which is giving others space and time to change at their pace, not ours. God sets the example for us by being patient and loving us constantly, even when we are mistaken.

So, are we up to the challenge of loving others enough to allow them to have a different position or belief to us?

We may be right but they might not be wrong!

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This 'I'm right, you're wrong' attitude happens often when celebrities divorce and get into a disagreement about their property, finances, or worst of all, children. Two people who once professed to love each

other, each believe that they are right and their former partner is wrong!

Sadly, even churches can do it when they insist their doctrines or beliefs are right and those of other churches are wrong.

How can we, as individuals, avoid falling into the trap of believing we are always right? And also, avoid alienating family, friends, and others when we defend our own beliefs so strongly?

The answer is in our headline above!

other for fifteen years. Both were stubbornly convinced they were right and neither would give an inch to resolve their differences.

I also had a close friendship with someone until I got promoted and he did not. We never had a heated argument about it, but his anger at the promotion of someone he considered to be less capable than himself fractured our close relationship.

Sadly, the 'I am right and you are wrong' attitude creates barriers that