

# On Maturity and Charity in Conversations

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One thing I've noticed is lacking generally in our conversations with each other, especially on social media, is maturity and charity. I know that isn't exactly an earth-shattering observation, but it does seem to be increasing.

Some examples:

1) Telling someone else why they *\*really\** believe what they believe, rather than accepting the reasons they give. When a person explains the reasons for their beliefs, it's best to take them at face value and respond to their reasons with reasons of your own, rather than telling them that you know what or why they really think.

2) Mocking behavior. Calling other people names, belittling their opinions, or using things like laugh reacts to respond to opinions you disagree with. Remember that the person you're talking to is a human being and treat them with respect, even and especially if you disagree with them. As Christ tells us, it's really no credit to us if we are kind to those who are kind to us. The real test of our character and maturity is how we treat our opponents.

3) Reading in bad faith what other people write, instead of trying to understand them honestly. This often takes the form of looking for words that are easy to twist or sound weird out of context, so that you can "score points" in a discussion. Doing that trivializes the importance of what's being discussed, since it treats the discussion or debate as a game to be won rather than an honest exchange of ideas.

We all need to do better. Really listening to each other, treating others with respect even when we disagree, and being kind may be more difficult than the childish ways we're used to talking to each other, but it's the only way we can really learn to live with each other.