

# INSULTS AND REBUKE

## What's the Difference?

### INSULT

sin

expression of impatience,  
contempt, bitterness,  
hatred, or vengeance

to get even—revenge

to belittle

*Raca* "You fool!"—  
literally "empty-head, numbskull"  
(Matt 5:22)

spoken in anger

result of anger  
(Matt 5:22)

### REBUKE

discipline

expression of love

to warn, wake up,  
restore to a right relationship,  
bring to the place of blessing

to correct

hypocrites, dogs, swine,  
blind men, blind guides,  
fools, whitewashed tombs,  
serpents, brood of vipers  
(Matt 3:7; 23:13, 16, 17, 24, 26, 27, 33)

spoken in anger  
(righteous indignation)

result of wrong priorities in others  
(Matt 23:17)



- insult and rebuke may be the same word (names, epithets) but the motives and goals differ (comp. Matt 5:22 with 23:17)
- insult and rebuke are easily confused by the person addressed (Luke 11:45)
- recipients of rebuke may wrongly judge your motives as sour grapes or sweet revenge