

Washington church of Christ

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The Washington Messenger

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October 6, 2013

Order of Services Sunday, October 6, 2013

Song Leader	Derald Sanchez
Prayer	Stan Thompson
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Pete Ferencze
Prayer for the Cup	Bob Wydro
Prayer for the Collection	Scott Thomas
Assisting at the Table	Bob Celentano
Scripture Reading	Bob Celentano Jr.
Morning Closing Prayer	David Osinski
Evening Opening Prayer	Tom Dolan
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

Dealing with an Inevitable...

Among the many truths about human behavior is the fact that wherever people live in close proximity to each other there will inevitably be friction ... whether it is in family, business, or the church. And, more often than not, the catalyst can be associated with material riches. It seems that material riches often create a spirit of contention, by making people proud and covetous. The intense mindset of "mine" and "thine" is prevalent in our world today.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.

(Psalms 133:1-3 NKJV)

Unfortunately our skills at handling strife and friction do not always match up to our skills in creating these problems. Because of this

there is a tendency to leave tensions unresolved, and this often means that they get worse. Some people deny that there is anything wrong or settle for a repressed anger which bodes ill for their future. Others admit only too freely that something is wrong, but they admit it to the wrong people, thereby compounding the problem. Their aim is directed more to seeking approval of their own behavior from a supportive person rather than a desire to rectify a bad situation with an offended or offensive person.

There has to be the right kind of confrontation if there is to be harmony. One thing I have learned over the years is that before you can adequately confront you must earn the right to do so by proving to the "confronted" that you genuinely have his or her interest at heart. Without this there is probably little that you can achieve except to make matters worse.

We must also have a willingness to back down ourselves. Confrontations that make one person a winner by manufacturing a loser out of the other person rarely achieve the desired result.

In Genesis 13 we find a situation where it seems riches created a problem. Poverty and labor, wants and wanderings, could not separate Abram and Lot ... but riches threatened to do so.

God had blessed Abram, and these blessings were a benefit to all who journeyed with him. But it seems that Abram now had to confront the unpleasant thought that the land of promise did not appear to be living up to its "promise".

Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. (Genesis 13:5-6 NKJV)

God had prospered him and had promised him the land, but the problem he now had to deal with was that what God appeared to be doing did not fit what God appeared to be providing.

This was another test of faith, and this test was made more severe by the "strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock" (Genesis 13:7).

When strife comes along something needs to be done. One obvious solution would have been for them to decide that they had made a genuine mistake and to move on to greener pastures. But Abram could not do that because he believed that God was behind his move into this piece of real estate, and so other solutions had to be found ... he showed what and how.

So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. (Genesis 13:8 NKJV)

Abram took the initiative, directly addressed the issue, appealed to what they had in common, and stated clearly his desire for resolution and ... Abram did not leave things there...

Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left." (Genesis 13:9 NKJV)

Abram, the senior member of the party, the one to whom the promise had been made, the one who received the call to leave Ur and proceed to the place of God's appointing, could have told his younger relative either to shape up or ship out! He refrained from such an action, and humbly made a concession which he trusted would resolve the issue. In this Abram shows himself to be a man of a calm spirit, and one in control of his passion. His soft answer is analogous to the words of the wise man Solomon ...

A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1 NKJV)

Those that would keep the peace must never engage in "railing for railing" (1 Peter 3:9).

Abram, through a condescending spirit, was willing to entreat even his lesser to be at peace. Whatever others are for, the people of God must be for peace.

The apostle Paul exhorts ...

Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. (Romans 14:19 NKJV)

Jesus, in addressing a dispute among some of his disciples about who would the greatest among them (Mark 9:33-34), said ...

Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." (Mark 9:50 NKJV)

In his commentary on this passage Albert Barns writes that Jesus' admonition to "Have salt in yourselves" means – "Have the preserving, purifying principle always; the principles of denying yourselves, of suppressing pride, ambition, contention, etc., and thus you will be an acceptable offering to God. And with reference to "have peace with one another", Barns writes, "Avoid contention and quarrelling, struggling for places, honors, and office, and seek each other's welfare."

Our Lord said, "It is impossible that no offenses should come..." (Luke 17:1 NKJV), and, it has been said that our second action, the one in response to strife, is often more significant than the first action, the one that created the strife.

Be at peace among yourselves. (1 Thessalonians 5:13 NKJV)

...Bob

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – Georgia DeLorenzo ... Sondra DeLorenzo ... all of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – John Baxter ... Larry Smith (Sharon Ferencze's brother) ... Frank and Antoinette Salerno (Annie's parents)

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

EVENTS AND NOTES

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ▲ THERE WILL BE A MEN'S SPIRITUAL/BUSINESS MEETING TODAY STARTING AT 4:00PM
- ▲ OUR FALL GOSPEL MEETING WITH JOE WORKS OF THE FAIR LAWN CONGREGATION IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 11TH – 13TH.
- ▲ THERE WILL BE A POTLUCK LUNCH AT THE WASHINGTON FIRE HOUSE ON BELVIDERE AVE AFTER SERVICES ON NEXT SUNDAY.
- ▲ THE NEXT BIBLE SCHOOL TERM STARTS ON OCTOBER 20TH. ALL THOSE ASSIGNED TO TEACH DURING THIS TERM ARE REQUESTED TO CONFIRM WITH BOB JAMES