

Intro: You may never have been involved with the subject we want to think about today but lets take a chance and assume that all of us have had some experience with

Quarreling

Say the word quietly under your breath and it gives us a little insight into the nature of it. Say it again slowly and listen carefully and you will hear the sound of (war).

Lets think about it for a while because quarreling or arguing is very prevalent in our world, in our homes, in our govt. in our schools, and often in our churches today.

Dave Egner writes in DB: I was watching two sisters prepare Thanksgiving dinner. They had made their special stuffing, spooned it into the turkey, and were preparing to pop it into the oven. They got out the aluminum foil and were ready to cover the meat to help hold in the juices. Betty had started to place the foil on the turkey, when Paula snapped, "That's not right! You're supposed to put the shiny side out." "That's ridiculous," Betty replied. "Everybody knows the shiny side goes on the inside." A heated discussion followed, and I'm not sure who got her way. I found out later that both sisters were right. It makes absolutely no difference which side is out.

Quarreling does happen and it is sometimes about trivial things. So lets think about it a bit today

I . Who quarrels

Children quarrel and many times they quarrel a lot. Actually sometimes parents unintentionally promote these conflicts because they respond more when children quarrel than when they cooperate? They also promote it because they have and allow unclear rules and boundaries and expectations?

Mates quarrel. Fellow workers quarrel, Worshipers quarrel. Neighbors quarrel. Quarrels take place at work, at church, in homes, and neighborhoods. Quarrels take place just about anywhere that there are two different people with two different sets of ideas about, well, just about anything.

II. Quarreling defined

Quarreling is defined as to have a difference; to dispute angrily, or violently; to wrangle; to scold; to altercate; to contend; to fight. It is a verbal conflict between competitors, friends, or even enemies, to find fault or dispute actively. Related words would be - bicker about, get in a tiff over, declare war on, or fuss about.

For our help and guidance as we live our lives, let's notice a couple of Biblical admonitions about it. Proverbs 6:16-19 *There are six things the LORD hates--no, seven things he detests or hates: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord among brothers.*

Here we see in V 19 that God hates all the fussing and squabbling and especially that fussing which goes on in many churches because it creates dissention or discord. Arguing and fussing actually puts us in numbered pews.

Pew number 1 is Gal. 5:19-21 *When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Quarreling has a part if we sit in pews 19-21 but does not have a part, if we are in Pew number 2 which is verses 22,23 where we read *But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.*

No matter which church you go to, the question is, which pew do you sit in when you are involved there? Pew 19-21 or the pew numbered 22,23

Titus 3:9-11 in the MSG reads *I want you to put your foot down. Take a firm stand on these matters so that those who have put their trust in God will concentrate on the essentials that are good for everyone. Stay away from mindless, pointless quarreling over genealogies and fine print in the law code. That gets you nowhere. Warn a quarrelsome person once or twice, but then be done with him. It's obvious that such a person is out of line, rebellious against God. By persisting in divisiveness he cuts himself off.*

Notice V 10 It is worthless even to the point of being ordered to reject the person who continues in after being warned a couple of times. I wonder how many people might be left in churches if we took that verse literally and enforced it without prejudice? But the fallout of church quarrels drifts over into other areas as well. This happens when we leave church because once a person gets into a quarrel they often hate to give it up. And sometimes quarrels come to church on Sunday morning. They start in the car

on the way to church and when we get there we are already in the mood for a fight so don't cross me today. Right???

III. What quarreling really leads to

It leads to anger, selfishness, pride, and then ultimately to defeat based on James. 4:1-10 V 6 where we read "*God sets himself against the proud, but he shows favor to the humble.*" Isn't it really pride and selfishness that are at the bottom of most quarrels?

IV. What quarreling results in

A. Broken relationships

Isn't it true that most quarrels often happen between people who have some sort of regular contact, therefore friends and acquaintances can quickly become enemies. Don't forget, enemies are made - not born.

B. Broken ministries

Isn't it true that so much time that is needed in actual ministry, is often spent on wrangling about who, what, when, where, why, and how it is to be done. Like the word of Jesus to the Pharisee, in Matthew 23:24 too many times we *strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.*

C. All of this finally results in **stunted Chr. growth.**

Quarreling is often related to status. I want people to think I'm right or I'm better or something else that makes me look or feel good. Growth is more important than status. Growth is fitting us for eternity, status is only related to time. When we get to heaven there is not going to be room for *I'm better or more important than you are* .

V. How to avoid this plague of quarreling

Let me offer these suggestions. I admit that I do not have them all down in practice myself, but I still think they might be helpful

A. Don't attack the person - work on the issue or the problem

B. Think about what is right not who is right

C. Refuse to withdraw from the other person because you are mad.

D. Desire to learn and grow from the experience

E. Don't take things personally it is just a matter of perspective, (How the person sees and understands the issue) In other words it is just a matter of understanding, how to deal with the issue from their life experience

F. Keep the volume under control. It is easy to yell yet remember soft words win hard hearts. Or as Thomas Fuller says it Soft words are hard arguments.

G. Don't major on the minors. Victor Hugo said, Strong and bitter words indicate a weak cause.

H. Look for things you in common rather than quarrel about the differences you have .

In II Timothy 2: 23,24 we read Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant argument that only start fights. The Lord's servants must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone. They must be able to teach effectively and be patient with difficult people. **Think about it this way:** Two dogs strive for a bone and the third one runs off with it.

I. Humble yourself - Exalt others

Philippians 2:3,4 *Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing.* Blowing out the other fellow's candle won't make yours shine any brighter

J. See yourself properly

Romans 12:3 reminds us with these words *For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment.* We don't need to quarrel just to prove we are better than someone else. We need to see ourselves as God created us. Try not to be too lowly or too proud because when we get into the extremes , that is where the quarrels come in.

K. Do your homework

Many quarrels result when people run on feelings and opinions w/o documentation. Therefore, talk about facts and the fussing due to personality traits and opinions will

lessen. When we do this it communicates that we want to stick to the issue or problem and stay away from attacking the person

L. Sometimes the way to avoid a quarrel is to just walk away.

Walk away **before the quarrel starts** not after you have gotten mad because you think you are losing. God uses Christians who stay cool in hot places, sweet in sour places, and little in big places.

Quarreling is a big problem among Christians as we seek our way in issues so lets think about this as we go out this week. Everyone wants the world, the home, the other person, the child, the school, the workplace and even the church changed in some way and we quarrel about it, but few there are who are willing to change themselves to make it happen.

There is an old Spanish that says " It takes two to quarrel, but only one to end it." Or how about this, A sure way of getting the last word in an argument is to say **you right**. Or maybe this. **I am sorry!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Listen to this illustration from DB on the danger of quarreling as we close. M.R. De Haan wrote,I was cruising along on the highway at about 60 miles an hour when up ahead I saw two sparrows in a fierce battle at the side of the road. With feathers flying, they attacked each other with great fury. As my car approached, they became locked in combat. Together they rose in the air and fluttered blindly into the path of the car. With a violent thud they smashed against the windshield, leaving a smear of blood and feathers. They were so preoccupied with their battle that they were blind to more serious dangers.

Interesting isn't it, that their quarrel cost them their lives. How often we act like those two sparrows! We fail to realize that in a fight no one ever wins. Both are losers. We carry grudges, and our irritations get blown out of proportion.

I don't know what those sparrows were fighting over, but it wasn't worth dying for. **Neither are our quarrels.** Learn a lesson from the sparrows. Forget your grievances, be ready to forgive, and admit it when you're wrong. Ask God's Spirit to produce in you "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" From pews 22-23

So next time you feel like fighting, remember those two dead sparrows by the roadside!

In closing maybe you have been quarreling with God and living like you can get to heaven on your own good merits. The bad news is God is not in a quarreling mood. Instead he says

this is the way, and that's the way it is. If you would like to end any speculation about that way just read and follow the following, to get the good news,

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)