

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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WHEN DIFFERENCES ARE ENCOUNTERED

Larry R. Ping II

The beauty of God’s creation is measured in an infinite number of ways. The Bible reports mankind is “*fearfully*” and “*wonderfully*” made (Psa. 139:14). Each human brought into this world is different from all others. Each one has a different set of fingerprints. Each one has a different disposition. Each one deals with problems and difficulties differently.

Dealing with those differences is not always easy. For some, it is downright difficult. What some have failed to learn is that it is possible to have differences with another individual and yet still display and extend common courtesy to that person. Some are under the assumption that if they have some type of a difference with another, they are no longer responsible for being considerate and caring. Is there some type of difference which would allow such? Consider.

1) PERSONAL DIFFERENCES. There are some differences that are not sinful in and of themselves. It

just may come down to a habit, or tendency or opinion that another has that does not sit well with you. It could be a myriad of things. It may be how they sit, or how they walk, or how they comb their hair or a host of other things. These may sound trivial, but to some, they are matters of great importance.

The Bible indicates we are to “bear with one another” (Eph. 4:2). The attitude here is one of understanding that each one is different, and may have dissimilar opinions on certain matters. This attitude means I know that not everyone does and thinks everything exactly the same as I do, and that is fine. This attitude means I am aware that others need to be in the limelight for once and not myself, and that is acceptable. This attitude means I know I will not always “get” my way, and that is okay.

What we need to understand is even if we have these differences, God accepts both (Rom. 14:3-4). Since this is true, each person still must exhibit love, care, concern and

and courtesy to the other. The inability to do so indicates one is more concerned about being right than they are about pleasing God.

2) DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES.

While personal differences can and should be tolerated, in no way should a doctrinal difference be permitted to stand. By doctrinal differences, we simply are referring to issues that God has already decided in His Word. With regard to these issues, not a single man has the right or authority to change or alter them.

The Bible has plenty to say with regard to those who would pervert God’s Word. Moses wrote that God’s Word should not be “*added to*” nor “*diminished*” from (Dte. 4:2). Solomon penned that adding to the Word of the Lord is the same as being a “*liar*” (Prov. 30:6). Principally speaking, the tampering with God’s Word is condemned in Rev. 22:18-19. John warns not to “*receive*” false teachers or to “*share in*” their work (II Jn. 9-11).

(cont.)

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All of the previously-mentioned facts are absolutely, without question true. To not abide by them only puts multiple souls in jeopardy.

However, just because I have doctrinal differences with someone does not give me license to be mean-spirited or discourteous. Yet, time and again, I have viewed or heard someone cross the line of doctrinally disagreeing to being un-Christian like in their behavior and conversation.

I have witnessed both vocally and on paper, those who will tear someone down as a person because they have a doctrinal disagreement with them. Nevertheless, James wrote *“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be”* (Jam. 3:9-10).

I also recall Jesus saying, *“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even*

so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

Brethren and friends, I submit to you that I have a responsibility to keep myself from those who would pervert God’s Word. I also submit to you that I have a responsibility to that same one to love them and to care for them and to demonstrate kindness and common courtesy to them. Until and when I do, I have not completed my Divinely given task.

I am sorry to say that I have not always been successful in doing these things. When I make errors along these lines, I need to determine to do better in the future. I implore you to do the same.

IMPORTANT VERSES TO REMEMBER ALONG THESE LINES OF TEACHING

◆ *“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”* (Eph. 4:32).

◆ *“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly*

love; in honour preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10).

◆ *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”* (Jn. 13:34-35).

◆ *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith”* (Gal. 6:10).

◆ *“See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men”* (I Thess. 5:15).

◆ *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”* (Heb. 12:14).

◆ *“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another”* (Rom. 14:19).

HOW ARE YOU DOING?

HOW AM I DOING?

LET US DO OUR BEST!

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm