

2. Now write down the kind of person you would talk to about that event.

3. If we were to try to figure out who had the most humiliating event, we would argue and there would be disunity. If we compare our answers for question #2; we probably would have described a similar kind of person: someone who is understanding, compassionate, has empathy, cares about us and our well being, merciful, kind ...

A. Homework Assignment: By the way, I like to sneak in a homework assignment with my talks, so your homework assignment this week is to become that person you wrote about in answering question #2.

4. Observation: when we talk about facts or events, there is disunity, when we talk about spirituality and people, there is unity. What if the topic of conversation was about the answers for question #2? There would be unity, and we could encourage one another (build each other up) to aspire to become like the people we describe in answering question #2.

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Announcements:

January's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity...
Ladies Monthly Fellowship
Wednesday's Men's Breakfast and Evening Study Group

2010

JANUARY 2010... CIVIL DISCOURSE



SUNDAY #2
JANUARY 10, '10

Welcome!

Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom
And the power and the glory
Forever and ever. Amen.

~ Opening Prayer, Romans 12:9-21
and 13:8-10, pages 776 & 777

~ Revelation Song, Page 9
~ Sweetly Broken, Page 1
~ Sing Alleluia, page 10

~ "Civility" Mike Lee

~ Breathe, page 10
~ Sharing the Bread & Cup

~ Prayers of the People
~ Weekly Grace
~ Morning Has Broken, Blue Hymnal #53
~ Closing Blessing

Civility

I. TOUCH YOUR NEIGHBOR

I always like to start my messages with everyone touching the person to their right on the shoulder and the person on your left on the shoulder.

II. INTRODUCTION

How can we, as a Christian community engage in discussions about very controversial and difficult topics in a Godly way? How does God want us to behave when we discuss lightning rod issues?

III. IS

A. What is going on now:

Before we talk about what God wants, I want to first talk about what is going on now, what is the current state of discussion and discourse.

1. Conflict, Usually Armed Conflict. One of the first recorded events in human history in the bible is a conflict between Cain and Able.

2. Max Weber: The government has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. See "Politik als Beruf" (Politics as a Vocation, 1918). Weber's thoughts were a key observation of the pivot from medieval times to the enlightenment. Individuals shouldn't fight, only a state legitimately uses force or violence.

3. **Etiquette: Trying not to be offensive in words and deed.**

Basically, let's not make Aunt Sally sick at the dinner table, and other forms of social rules.

4. Attention & Profit: The goal of current media is generally profit, and this is done in our society by drawing attention to yourself and your show any way possible, regardless of etiquette, integrity, standards of journalism or any other social restraint.

5. Aggrandize or Maintain Political Power: Our current political system has devolved to a point where laws are no longer an estimation of the **volksgeist**: *the spirit of the people*; laws these days are nothing more than a history of political results.

B. Not like the world:

Jesus asks us to be very distinctive (holy) from the world. We are to pursue a very different path than profit and power; we are to specifically reject profit or power as a goal or motive. See the 3 temptations of Jesus, see also Matthew 16:26 (What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?) and Matthew 20:25-28 (Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. *Not so with you.* Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.")

IV. BEING RIGHT

1. What if you're right? So after arguing a difficult topic, like abortion, you are right. You figure out what the right answer is, and it is later proven true. Another difficult situation is Afghanistan: (to quote Johnny Rotten) "Should we stay or should we go?" Let's say you figure out what the right answer is. Now what?

2. Jesus on Being Right: Luke 36-50. Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman. See verse 43. Jesus says: "you have judged correctly" or "you're right." But Simon, the man who asked the question is nowhere near right with God.

3. Different: In our culture, being right is a big deal, but in the Kingdom of God, Jesus doesn't care! Being right doesn't matter! Paul says it like this: 1 Cor. 12:1- 3. Without a heart of love, being right means nothing.

V. LIVING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A. Beyond Right and Wrong:

How is it possible to transcend right and wrong? We learn from Paul that love is much more important than right and wrong, but how does that play out in community?

B. One Another:

The "one another" commands in the Bible provide the basis for Godly interaction within the Christian community.

C. The Goal of the One Another Commands:

To build up one another:

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (ESV)

2. 1 Corinthians 14:26 "What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." (ESV)

3. Romans 14:19 "So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up." (NLT)

D. Living This Out - Redeeming Conversation:

What if our dialogue, or discussions were all about building each other up? What if that were the focus? Instead of trying to be "right" (which God doesn't care about) we tried to build each other up with every word that was spoken? How would that influence our discussions?

E. Another Goal of the One Another Commands:

Unity in the body of Christ...

1. 1 Corinthians 1:10 "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought."

2. Ephesians 4:3-4 "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

F. The Interplay of Building and Unity

1. Write down on a piece of paper the most embarrassing, humiliating event in your life.