

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

For what crime could a man have his shoe taken away and his face spit in?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Fiery Serpents - Numbers 21:6

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My Brother/My Self The Dividing Wall of Prejudice

Brent Lewis

Listen to this notable account found in God's word. "Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:45-46). As far as we know from history, Nazareth was not a particularly contemptible place. Nathanael, however, probably could not conceive of the Messiah coming from such an insignificant village. Furthermore, he was from Cana, and there may very well have been the rivalry then between close-together small cities that often exists today. But, whatever the explanation, Nathanael was prejudiced and it almost cost him his soul. There is no reason to believe that he was a bad man; in fact, the opposite is true (John 1:47). He was merely influenced by his prejudices.

All of us are. Prejudice is a "preconceived judgment or opinion; unreasonable predilection or objection; esp., an opinion or leaning adverse to anything without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge" (Webster). We are all prejudiced —just about different things. I have had some prejudices in the past that I am not proud of. I still have some that I am working on. The Christian must guard against prejudice.

Our title suggests that prejudice is a “wall” or a barrier that stands between me and my brother. Why is this so? What are the results of prejudice in one’s life? Prejudice causes one to:

1. Speak contemptibly of others. When some Jews got angry at Jesus, they said, “Say not we well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a demon?” (John 8:48). There was nothing more hated to the Jew than a Samaritan, and these Jews apparently used it here as an epithet, a term of abuse. Since this was a common idea, did this then mean that no Samaritan was worth anything? Prejudice divides because it causes one to generalize and categorize, to view people in a lump rather than as individuals. Such terms as kike, dago, spic, honky, broad, jig, etc., are frequent in our time. We must seriously question, however, whether we can use such terms for people and have the view of them that a Christian ought to have.

2. Shun associations. The woman at the well in Samaria was amazed that Jesus would talk to her because (as John explains) “Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” (John 4:9). Brethren in the New Testament were incensed at Peter because he had gone in and eaten with the Gentiles (Acts 11:3). Prejudice causes one to place certain classes of people “off limits.” It may be that they are not the “right” color, or that they do not live in the right part of town, or do not wear the right kind of clothes. We must particularly guard against the notion that the church today is to be made up only of “upper middle class” people.

3. Think too highly of oneself. Prejudice places too high an estimate on oneself, something we are warned against in Scripture (Romans 12:3). We are prejudiced when we think that we are “too good” to associate with others—that they are somehow “beneath” us. I read of two officers’ wives in the armed services who were having lunch at the Officers’ Club. There was a sentry standing guard at a nearby gate within their view. All of a sudden there came a terrible thunderstorm; the soldier was at the mercy of the elements. One of the

women said, “Look at that poor soldier out there—he’s getting soaked!” The other replied, “Don’t worry about him, my dear—he’s only a private!” We must disdain this attitude.

4. Reject what is true. The familiar sign says, “Don’t confuse me with the facts. My mind is already made up.” This is one of the worst things about prejudice—it always hurts its possessor. In the New Testament, men who didn’t believe in the resurrection were unwilling to consider the evidence for it (Acts 17:32); and those who were already religious would not even consider that they might be wrong (Matthew 13:14–17). Prejudice, which sees only what it pleases, cannot see what is plain. It is very difficult for an idea to squeeze itself into a head filled with prejudice.

You separate yourself from others by prejudice. One must be willing to consider all sides. Unfortunately, prejudice runs so deep in some people that they couldn’t listen to both sides of a phonograph record. Don’t be so narrow-minded that your ears rub together. Christianity Magazine APRIL 1985
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SOME SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS for character building:

1. You don’t have to be disagreeable to disagree.
2. You can be dissatisfied without being unhappy.
3. A person who doesn’t pray often should beware of spiritual erosion.
4. The worship God expects is a heart-involved one.
5. Be careful you don’t stand up so straight you fall over backwards.
6. No person can know if he’s on the right course who doesn’t first know where he is. From “That Life” by Dee Bowman in Christianity Magazine