

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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Elders:

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Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
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This Week's Question:

Who wept at her husband's feet and tried to dissuade him from listening to the advice of his assistant?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Elisha - 2 Kings 8:11

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Be Careful What You Say!

Dee Bowman

I recently made this entry in my journal: "It bothers me how we treat one another sometimes. The Scriptures say a lot about loving your brother, about making sure that he comes first in your preferences, that he is accorded the kind of respect and honor he deserves, even when you disagree with him.

"Is it so that just because we have the truth we have the right to use it for a flailing stick? Surely not. It's certainly true that the word is the sword of the Spirit, but I worry about how the Spirit feels about how we use it sometimes. If we are to love our enemies, if we are to do good to them that despitefully use us, how, pray tell, should we treat our brethren? And if we win the point and lose the object of our rebuke, cui bono, to whose profit is it? What price repute? Is it right to gain it by constantly shooting others down? Is that legitimate brother-love? One thing seems clear to me: you can be right and still be wrong."

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" speaks volumes about the character of God. "He causes his rain to fall on the just and on the unjust" says even more. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" gives

marvelous testimony to the love of God. And, if God so loved us, ought we not to love one another? And in the same way?

I suggest that we step back and take a look at what we're doing, that we reexamine our motives and make sure we are being fueled in our actions by high and noble persuasions. After all, it's the people who are important, not my reputation, not my satisfaction, not my ego.

Three points come quickly to my mind:

1. Before you say something about someone, best be sure it's true. Too many times people say what they've heard, not what they know. Gossip is gossip, no matter who tells it. Hearsay is hearsay even if the person who tells it is a preacher, a bible class teacher, or an elder. It is a dangerous thing to repeat unverified information; it may make you a participant in an untruth. "A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips: and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue" (Proverbs 17:4). It is serious business to provide an ear for false information. It would amaze us, I think, if we knew how much information is repeated without ever having been verified. Furthermore, even if you can verify a thing as true, is it not better to make a personal call rather than broadcasting the information to the hurt of your brother?

2. Before you say something about someone, best examine the reason for saying it. I'm not sure why people get a thrill out of being the first to tell something. If we would take the time to examine our real motives for telling things, we might do better about being quiet. Am I telling this to help the person? Is my telling of it apt to build up his reputation or tear it down? Will my telling make others more kindly disposed to him or less so? Before you criticize someone, you best make sure you love them. Abraham Lincoln was reported to have said "Don't criticize until you know you can help." Remember Solomon's statement in Ecclesiasties 10:1, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and

honor." Sometimes it only takes a little stinky story to ruin a reputation that was a lifetime in the building.

3. Before you say something about someone, remember how Jesus said, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." If you would not want your name slandered, don't be guilty of slandering others. If you would not want half-truths told as if they were all the truth on the matter, or if you wouldn't want someone to suggest something by innuendo, then don't be guilty of telling just part of the story or leaving a wrong impression about someone. Jesus' rule rules out a considerable amount of foolish talking and rules in a considerable amount of love. "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Proverbs 17:9). The enjoinder doesn't mean we can tolerate sin, but it encourages us to do all we can for the sinner before we tell about his sin. Sometimes telling even things that are true need to be held back until every effort has been made to do all we can for the sinner. After all, isn't that how you would want someone to treat you?

No one that I know of thinks sin should be tolerated in the name of love, but when our rebukes take the form of scathing criticism and our efforts to restore people are filled with acrimonious denunciations, I doubt the effectiveness of it, not to mention the fact that God is not glorified by such actions.

The tongue is hard to control—for everyone, not just a few. It requires the most intense concentration to hold it back from its tendency toward wildness, but it is every man's responsibility to do the best he can to tame it. Without that intense concentration, it will kindle all kinds of fires, some of which cannot be extinguished until the judgment and some of which may turn into such a huge conflagration that it will cause many people to be lost. (Christianity Magazine, January, 1998, Volume 15, Number 1)