**Sowing Discord Among Brethren**

Ken Weliever / The Preacher’s Word



Perhaps you’ve heard the story about a man who was stranded on a desert island for many, many years. One day, while strolling along the beach, he spotted a ship in the distance. This had never happened in all the time he was on the island, so he was very excited about the chance of being rescued.

Immediately, he built a fire on the beach and generated as much smoke as possible. It worked! Soon, the ship was heading his way. When the ship was close enough to the island, a dinghy was dispatched to investigate the situation. The man on the island was overjoyed with the chance to be rescued and met his saviors as they landed.

After some preliminary conversation, the ship’s Captain asked the man how he had survived for so many years. He replied by telling of his exploits for food and how he was able to make a fine house to live in. In fact, the man said, *“You can see my home from here. It’s up there on the ridge.”* He pointed the men in the direction of his home. They looked up and saw 3 buildings. They inquired about the building next to the man’s house and he replied, *“That’s my church – I go there to worship on Sundays.”*  When asked about the third building, the man replied, *“That’s where I used to go to church.”*

Indeed. Some people can’t even get along with themselves, let alone other people. Or even their own brethren in Christ. Discord, dissension and division among brethren is dangerous and deadly. In fact, our God of love considers it so serious that the Bible actually says that He hates it. ***“These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.”*** (**Proverbs 6:16-19**)

Commenting on this passage Jeff Strite wrote, “Each and every sin listed in this passage tells of wicked people who hurt others. Others who are made in the image of God. Imagine someone hurting someone in your family whom you love, doing mean and painful things that damage that special someone. Wouldn’t you get angry and wouldn’t you feel a bit of hatred for someone who would be so mean and cruel to your loved one?” “Of course you would,” concluded Jeff. “You would take it personal. You would hate. And God takes it kind of personal. He hates it.”

There are many different kinds of seeds that result in discord among brethren. The seed of pride, that my opinion is better than others, is divisive. The seed of selfishness that demands my way. Or else. The seeds of whispering, gossip and carefully spoken innuendo quickly produce an ungodly harvest dividing good brethren.

Discord violates the unity of believers for which Christ prayed (**John 17**). It disturbs the oneness of “the body” for which Paul pled (**Ephesians 4:1-16**). It destroys the badge of discipleship, the bond of love, that should identify us as followers of Jesus (**John 13:34-35**).

Discord impairs the purpose for which God called us. It interrupts our focus on ministry. It is a detriment to our fellowship. It weakens our worship. It retards our spiritual growth. And it disrupts our mission of saving souls.

Discord hurts everyone in “the family”. It results in weariness of the mind. A burden on the heart. A heaviness of spirit. A nagging spiritual ache that seeks relief, but is not soothed. It just hurts. Robert Pearce once wrote, “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God.” Discord among God’s people breaks His heart. It should break our heart too.