

Bay City Wesleyan Church  
May 21, 2017

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Sunday Morning 05-21-2017 (Church Membership Celebration)  
Our Challenge for 2017 is to regularly ask Jesus, "Am I following you?"  
When was the last time you asked?  
<http://bible.com/events/221969>  
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[Image]  
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[http://d1o2alqw72z1h8.cloudfront.net/5722009-1483223017441\\_152x152.jpg](http://d1o2alqw72z1h8.cloudfront.net/5722009-1483223017441_152x152.jpg)

Our theme for 2017 is Jesus' invitation, "Follow me."

These two simple words will transform every person that accepts the challenge. I pray that in the next few months all of us in this church, as well as those who join us, will see Jesus more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

Series Introduction:

All kinds of people, even the most extreme introverts, want relationships that refresh and renew their souls. Everyone avoids the people who drain the life out of them. Right?

Unfortunately, we live in a broken world. We are broken people and broken people end up breaking other people.

Jesus came into our broken world to restore and renovate it. He focuses his restoration process on broken people like us. He makes us new. Then Jesus invites us to join him in making other people new.

To work with Jesus, you need to take the first step into relationships that refresh by speaking the native language of God's Family - grace and kindness.

Then you must realize that the Holy Spirit creates and maintains life-giving peace in our families.

Broken people in this broken world disagree disagreeably. This creates a problem because "the local church is the hope of the world." God restores this broken world through the actions of the capital "c" Church. And each local congregation is a part of the action as far as it shares Jesus' love with its community.

How do we deal with disagreements between committed Jesus-followers?

SYMPTOMS:

- A. Church hopping
- B. Church splits
- C. Gossip and slander often disguised as prayer requests
- D. Judging each other's motives
- E. Withholding financial support

How do we deal with disagreements between committed Jesus-followers?

CAUSES:

1. Expectations kill relationships.
2. Experiences shape standards.
3. Preferences generate stress.
4. Personalities produce friction.
5. Opinions make opponents.

Philippians 4:1-7 NIV

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends! I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
<http://bible.com/111/php.4.1-7.NIV>

Sermon in a Sentence:

I commit to appreciating and loving those who disagree with me so we all know we are disagreeing agreeably.

Humans even committed Jesus-followers, often disagree disagreeably. This creates a problem because "the local church is the hope of the world." God restores this broken world through the actions of the Church. And each local congregation is a part of the action as far as it shares Jesus' love with its community. When we disagree disagreeably, our church cannot participate in God's restoration work as well as we could otherwise. The good news is that Jesus will help us disagree agreeably when we agree in the Lord.

2 Kings 10:15 NET

When he left there, he met Jehonadab, son of Rekab, who had been looking for him. Jehu greeted him and asked, "Are you as committed to me as I am to you?" Jehonadab answered, "I am!" Jehu replied, "If so, give me your hand." So he offered his hand and Jehu pulled him up into the chariot.  
<http://bible.com/107/2ki.10.15.NET>

John Wesley's View of Church Relationships

If you obey the great commandments about love, or if you are sincerely eager for it to be true and you're working with God to make it true for you, then "your heart is right, as my heart is with your heart."

"If your heart is as my heart," if you love God and all people, I ask no more: "give me your hand."

"Give me your hand" by loving me like a brother in God's family.  
...by praying for me.  
...by encouraging me.  
...by joining me in God's work.  
...by speaking well of me.

Citation: <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-39-catholic-spirit/>

[Plan]

OUTCRY: God's Heart For Your Church

14 Days

<http://bible.com/r/zE>