

THE BIBLE VIEW

In This Issue:

[Get Along with Others](#)

[Let's Go Out to the Tree](#)

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Get Along with Others

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"A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalm 133:1

One of the hardest things in life is to get along with others. We are all different, and we will have our own opinions. We will have disagreements and will often disapprove of what others may do.

If one is a Christian, however, we should get along with others, especially other believers. After one is born-again into the family of God, one has an obligation and is commanded to get along with fellow Christians.

There is much in God's Word about getting along with other Christians. Here is some of what the Bible teaches about having relationships with other believers:

- We are commanded not only to get along with other Christians, but we are to love them.
"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34
"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." John 15:12
"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Gal. 5:14
Also: John 15:17, Rom. 13:8, I Thes. 3:12, I Thes. 4:9, Heb. 13:1, I Peter 1:22, 2:17, I John 3:11, 23, I John 4:7, 11-12.
- Christians should desire to fellowship with those of similar beliefs.
"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;" Rom. 12:10
- There will be differences and disagreements among believers, but we must strive to get along with others.
"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;" Eph. 4:2
"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." I Peter 5:5
- Ultimately, all Christians should be like-minded in the things of God. Our beliefs should unify us.
"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philippians 2:2
"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." I Pet. 3:8
- Not only should we love our Christian brothers and sisters, but we should strive to help and meet their needs.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Gal. 5:13

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:” Heb. 10:24

- Christians are your brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray for them as you would your biological family members.

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16

- Our getting along with other believers is a good testimony to others watching our lives. Likewise, those that are at odds with other members of the family of God are poor testimonies. Disunity among the brethren is observed and is often a reason others no longer go to church or associate with believers.

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35

It is not always easy to get along with others, and that includes Christians. Some of the worst damage done to Christianity, however, is the feuding, fussing, and fuming done among believers. The world sees this, and it becomes a black-eye for the cause of Christ.

It takes Christian maturity and often much humbleness, but for Christ’s sake and His cause, we must try to love our fellow believers. It can be most “pleasant” when we get along with Christian family members.

“Love is the doorway through which the human soul passes from selfishness to service and from solitude to kinship with all mankind.” — Author Unknown

Let’s Go Out to the Tree

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The argument became very heated. One red-faced teenager shouted at the other, “It’s your fault. You started it. You’re the one that...” On and on, he blasted the other young man and proceeded to scream that it was the other’s fault.

Stopping his opponent mid-sentence, the other teen screamed back. He too stood his ground, “No, no. You’re the one that started it. You did ...,” and on he went with his side of the story.

Back and forth, the squabble went, each accusing the other. Neither backed down or tried to understand the other. Each figured, if they would get louder than the other, one would give in and back down; neither did. The predictable next step in the argument happened; nose to nose, one pushed the other.

“It’s a fight! Fight! Fight!” Watching classmates announced to others, so they too could see the boy-against-boy confrontation.

“Alright,” I broke in doing the teacher thing. “Break it up. Break it up,” as I stepped in to separate the scrappers. “Alright. Who started it?”

The answer was exactly what you would expect, “He did,” explained one.

“No, he did,” retorted the other, and the bickering continued.

It was obvious that the disagreement was nowhere near being solved. “Com’ on, boys. Let’s go out to the tree and talk,” I suggested. Off we went to separate the two from their on-looking peers and to hopefully solve the crisis under the spreading branches of an old oak outside the classroom.

I let one tell his side of the story first, demanding the other keep quiet and just listen. He did well, except for some obvious body language, and then it was the other young man’s turn to tell his side of the story. After both sides were heard, it was quite clear that after the half-a-hour discussion ended, not one of the boys was going to concede and do anything to remedy the problem. Neither was willing to forgive or forget.

Finally, I turned to the one who usually was the most sensitive and understanding, and said, “Look, this is going nowhere. No one is willing to try to fix the situation. Someone has to go first and try to smooth things out. Someone has to realize that unless pride is forgotten, and one does not worry about being right, the situation will not be solved. No one will win anything but hard feelings! Will you be the one to go first? Will you be the one to admit that perhaps you could have handled this a little better and that this disagreement is not worth your being bitter at each other? It usually takes two to disagree.”

The boy thought about it, scuffed the dirt with his shoe, looked down and contemplated the situation. Finally, he realized that someone had to go first unless he wanted this disagreement never to end. He did want it to be resolved. He looked the other boy in the eye and said, “I am sorry this got out of hand. Yes, I should not have lost my temper....”

The other quickly followed suit. “Yeah, I handled it wrongly, too. I shouldn’t have....” The wall of bitterness, pride, and selfishness had been broken down. Shortly, the two were talking and playing ball together like nothing had ever happened, all because one humbled himself and went first.

How many disagreements have never been resolved, all because one never gave up their pride and dared to go first? One’s ego may have been preserved in not working out the problem, but what was gained? A friendship may have been lost or permanently weakened, and an unresolved bitterness grew and festered, all because one was waiting on the other to fix the controversy.

Relationships are not easy, be it between man and woman, parent and child, or between friends. There will come a time when there will be disagreements. How will they be handled? What does an unresolved conflict accomplish? Is one’s being right in a disagreement really worth the loneliness, the loss of friendship, the festering bitterness, and lack of trust for future relationships?

To resolve issues, someone usually has to go first and attempt to change the situation. Disagreements rarely resolve themselves.

It does not matter who did what in the end. One has to humble one’s self first. Many times, when one breaks the ice, the other will follow. When it comes down to it, all of us usually have done something wrong to have a disagreement ensuing.

In getting the matter right, it is not necessary to rehash how you have been wronged. That vicious circle will never end. Admit your wrong-doing in the situation. All could have handled the problem better.

If we all look hard, there is usually something that we could have not said or handled differently in the confrontation. Start there in the restoration of a relationship. Do not be concerned with what the other did, but be concerned with what you did wrong. Get that part right with the other person, yourself, and the Lord. The other person may do the same thing and admit he was wrong. He may not. Our concern should only be that we do the right thing. We have to answer for ourselves, not others.

The Bible tells us that we should get matters resolved as quickly as possible (Ephesians 4:26). The longer they fester, the more damage is done. I am sure many are long past the time that they should be heading out to the old, oak tree.

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:”

— *Ephesians 4:26*