

BREACHING A DAM!

Matthew 5:38-49

INTRODUCTION: At times our Lord had some very radical teaching. If we are not careful we will think Jesus has just gone too far this time. Our verses for today from our Lord's own mouth could seem to be one of those times. Matthew 5:44. We are warned when we go into self defense mode that things can quickly get out of hand: Proverbs 17:14. Unfortunately even Christians, who should know better are not immune from settling disputes with quarreling and the ensuing destruction that is wrought by not dealing with our disagreements in a biblical way. We have never learned or been taught how to handle disagreements in a way that turns the power of disagreement from one that devastates our homes, churches, jobs and schools to a biblical resolution that turns the power of God to bless and mature us.

I. THE FIRST STEP IN THE RESOLUTION OF A DISAGREEMENT IS TO EXPECT DISAGREEMENTS!

When disagreements come don't drop the ball of Christ-likeness. When a disagreement comes into our lives the question is "Will I be prepared to handle it in a Christ honoring Biblical way, or will I chose to handle it in a way that brings even more conflict? Hebrews 12:14-15.

II. THE SECOND STEP IN THE RESOLUTION OF A DISAGREEMENT IS DON'T ADD TO IT!

Sadly many folks just cannot resist adding wood to the fire of disagreement: Proverbs 26:20-21. Don't add fuel to the fight by telling others about the conflict that don't need to know about it: Matthew 18:15-18. You can breach a dam and cause great destruction by getting people on your side.

III. THE THIRD STEP IN RESOLUTION OF OUR DESAGREEMENTS: DISCERN THE SOURCES OF DISAGREEMENT!

Relational disagreements are the majority of our conflicts: Philippians 4:2-3. Our relational disagreements come at the cost of fellowship: Philippians 2:1-4; Amos 3:3; Philippians 2:14-16. Our spiritual disagreements often spring from a lack of spiritual discernment and maturity: 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Proverbs 13:10; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 3:12; Romans 14:13-18; Jude 1:3. We do contend for the faith but not over debatable matters: 2 Timothy 2:23-26. We must not strive over strategies or we will separate: Acts 15:36-40. We must learn how to disarm the disagreement before the dam bursts. Ephesians 6:4.

IV. THE FOURTH STEP IN RESOLUTION OF OUR DISAGREEMENTS: ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS MY DISAGREEMENT?"

Proverbs 26:17: we need as parents to know when to release our children to handle their own marital and parenting problems.

V. THE FIFTH STEP IN RESOLUTION OF OUR DISAGREEMENTS: ASK GOD'S ASSISTANCE TO RESOLVE THE DISAGREEMENT!

James 1:5. If we have a God Who has promised to give us wisdom if we will only ask; wouldn't it be wise to ask? Proverbs 15:1; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; James 1:19-20; James 3:13-18.

VI. THE SIXTH STEP IN RESOLUTION OF OUR DISAGREEMENTS: DETERMINE TO GROW THROUGH THE DISAGREEMENT!

We don't want to waste the disagreements that come our way. We must learn from them. Remember a smooth sea does not make great sailors. 1 Peter 1:6-7. We must determine that we will walk in the Spirit of God through our disagreements: Galatians 5:22-23; Galatians 5:16; Proverbs 19:11. We must learn to walk with our Lord through our disagreements: Hebrews 12:1-4. We must allow our Lord to even the score: Romans 12:17-21. As we do good and bless in all our disagreements we can expect our Lord to use them to bless both us and those we are in disagreement with as we obey our Lord in our times of disagreement. 2 Chronicles 16:7-9. If we don't learn from our disagreements and we allow them to make us disagreeable we will breach our dams and be constantly at war!