

Repenting Of Disagreements

by Foley Beach

Archbishop Foley Beach challenges listeners to focus on repentance during Lent, specifically addressing how to respond when disagreeing with others. He emphasizes the importance of love, patience, and kindness as taught by Jesus and the Apostle Paul. The sermon highlights the need for Christians to exhibit Christ-like behavior, even in the face of disagreements and differing opinions, to maintain relationships and effectively share the gospel message.

Duration: 8:45

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, Galatians 5:22, 1 Corinthians 13:4, Luke 4:28, Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 4:2

Topics: "Repentance", "Christ-like Behavior in Disagreements"

Description

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Transcript

I am Archbishop Foley Beach, the Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church in North America. On this Ash Wednesday, I bring you greetings and a challenge in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the Ash Wednesday service, we find the following words.

The priest will, or the officiant, will say this, I invite you therefore in the name of the church to the observance of a holy Lent by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on God's holy word. Now, we often hear about prayer and Bible study and giving, but we don't hear much about repentance. And so this Lenten season, I want to challenge you to consider the following as a possible area of repentance, to examine this area of your life, to work on it, and with the help of the Holy Spirit to bring about repentance.

What do you do when you disagree with somebody? What do you do when somebody treats you badly? How do you respond when someone does not agree with your point of view about something? The teaching of Jesus runs counter to our natural thinking and the way our society is teaching us to respond. I would like to focus on how we should react when someone says something we disagree with. This could be a relative, a friend, a leader, your church.

This could be about the faith, this could be about politics, this could be about the vaccine, this could be about gossip. What I'd like to focus on is not whether the content is correct or not, truth or not, or biblical or not, but what is the biblical response when you disagree with somebody? The biblical response is not what we see in our current culture in social settings. Sadly, discourse and dialogue have been set aside.

If you disagree with someone, they write you off, they disassociate with you, they break the bridge. Friends, relatives, work associates block you and defriend you on social media or their email or on their phones just because you disagree with them. To use the social term, they cancel you.

What is most disturbing is we see this behavior invading parts of God's one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and this ought not be. Sure, there have been important doctrinal divisions in the universal church that which have divided us, and through ecumenical discussions we seek to bridge these chasms, but as disciples of Jesus, as peacemakers, not associating with someone because they have a different political perspective or a different view on wearing mask or a different view on homeschooling or a different view on the new store going and up the road. This is not the character of Jesus.

The follower of Jesus is different from the unbeliever. When we ask Jesus into our life to be our Lord and Savior, to forgive us of our sins, to take what he did on the cross and make it ours, he gives us forgiveness. He gives us eternal life, but he also gives us an incredible gift, the Holy Spirit.

This Holy Spirit who comes and indwells us, and the role of the Holy Spirit is to make us more like Jesus, to make us think like him, to act like him, to talk like him. In his letter to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul explains the result of the Holy Spirit living in our lives. In Galatians chapter 5, he says the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of having him in your life is love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, kindness, and self-control.

We all know the greatest commandment is what? To love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength. And the second great commandment is what? The second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. Well, again, the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 tells us what love is.

Love is patient and kind. Love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Now, these scriptures, these exhortations that the Lord has given us are not telling us we have to agree with others or even like what they do, but they are telling us what is appropriate behavior toward others. In the time in which we live, it is heartbreaking to see families torn apart, longtime friendships ruined just because someone had a different opinion from you.

What's wrong with them having an incorrect opinion? Does it mean that I can't have a relationship with you just because you're wrong or taking the humble route? What if they're correct? Brothers and sisters in Christ, you can't do anything about someone canceling you or writing off your relationship, but you can do something about your response. A few weeks ago, our Sunday reading was from Luke chapter 4. You may remember the story. Jesus was doing some ministry.

He goes back to his hometown of Nazareth, and he begins to minister in the local synagogue, and they asked him to read the scripture, and he begins to teach, and they did not like what he said. The folks in Nazareth were so enraged, the text tells us, so angry that they wanted to kill him. They tried to throw him off the cliff to his death.

In a serious way, we are killing friendships, family relationships, and the honor of good people just because we don't agree with them about something. This ought not be the behavior of the follower of Jesus. Jesus said, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

One other thought. If our mission is to reach others with the gospel of Jesus and to share his message with a hurting and needy world, how can we do this if we disassociate ourselves from others just because we don't like their perspective? We can't, and we won't. So here again, the reading from the Ash Wednesday service.

I invite you therefore in the name of the church to the observance of a holy Lent by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on God's holy word. In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, amen.

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