

SOUNDS OF SALEM

A MONTHLY PRINT AND DIGITAL NEWSLETTER OF SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VENEDOCIA, OHIO

Volume 22 Issue 7

July 2020

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

¹⁵ "If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. ¹⁶ But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector (Matthew 18:15-17 NLT).

Two Christians in the church once came to me to help work out a dispute amongst them. I appreciated their seeking to work out their differences in the Christian way, and I went over Christian concepts with them. The world is watching Christians to see if they are different than the world in which we live. When we have conflict among ourselves, they want to see if we display the Galatians 5:22 Fruits of the Spirit of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." In other words, are we truly living for Christ or living for our selfish selves? Knowing this, Jesus left the church instructions on resolving the disputes that would arise in the church.



First, meeting in private meeting helps to avoid the issues of gossip that can occur when a matter is taken to third parties rather than the person involved. It is hard emotionally to bring up issues one on one. We find it easier to bring it to others first, but Jesus says that a Christian is called to speak to the matter with the other person one on one. Sometimes we need to learn and to practice Reflective Listening to communicate without emotions getting in the way [Learning Link](#). When handled privately, misunderstandings can be addressed, and there is great potential for the other person to respond positively.

Second, when private discussion does not solve the issue, a Christian is to take one or two other Christ-followers and meet with the person; it allows for additional witnesses to observe the matter firsthand and helps determine the proper course of action.

Third, when there is no resolution, the issue is to be taken before the local church. Only in exceptional cases will a Christian seeking to follow the Lord refuse to put

an end to the conflict when the entire congregation is engaged.

Lastly, if the person in the center of the conflict refuses to respond favorably even when the entire flock is involved, then that individual is to be excommunicated to remove the negative influence from the congregation. It is a rarity for a person choosing to continue sinning regardless of being corrected, but addictions, anger, and personality issues that are not yet healed, may play a part in their refusal to change.

Christians are called to handle disagreements in love, with a goal of reestablishment. Disputes should be handled according to the steps listed in Matthew 18. This style of conflict resolving is based on a desire for holy living and Christian love for the person who has committed wrong.

Pastor Tom Emery

Be Still, My Soul

1 Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.

Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

2 Be still, my soul: your God will undertake
to guide the future as he has the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below..

3 Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. [Song link](#)

Biblical Conflict Resolution

Relational conflict is hard. Facing it is uncomfortable. Experiencing conflict affects our daily rhythms

and routines. Conflict can even cause us to doubt God's goodness, His will for our lives, or His love for us. But, in fact, God often uses conflict to refine our character, draw us closer to Him, and, ultimately, to glorify Himself.

The Bible is full of wisdom about how believers should handle conflict, yet far too many Christians end up handing their disputes over to the secular court to decide their fate – an outcome that will be determined by worldly statutes, rules, and regulations that may or may not align with Biblical wisdom or a party's Christian worldview and values. Biblical principles for conflict resolution can be applied to any type of conflict. And scripture provides the *best* approach to conflict resolution, one that will result in lasting peace if both parties will only commit to following God's ordained methods.

According to some counts, Christians actually divorce at a *higher* rate than non-Christians. And most Christians divorce the same way that non-Christians divorce: submitting their dispute to the secular Court when they cannot resolve their legal disputes themselves. The same could be said for Christians in business disputes or Christian friends or family members in interpersonal conflict: As Christians, we just don't "do" conflict well. And no wonder!

Usually, the Church has not equipped believers to address conflict biblically. Christian counseling or therapy might be the only option or referral offered. Simply too few resources exist to support Christians through the process of biblical conflict resolution. And if they do, Christians do not know where to find them.

If we look to God's Word and follow His guidance, we can experience peace from conflict, and provide a compelling witness to others of His goodness and love.

Self-Reflection

Romans 3:23 "...for all have sinned..."

Matthew 7:3-5 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and

then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Man's fall from grace in the Garden of Eden continues to affect every relationship. We are all sinners, whose hearts have tendencies toward self-serving motivations and selfish pride. The first step in any biblical approach to conflict resolution is necessarily turning our gaze inward, inspecting our emotional responses, checking them against God's Word, repenting of our sin, and preparing our hearts for a humble posture toward our adversary. We cannot expect to experience peace if we have not first identified our role in the conflict.



If you are feeling anxious about personally addressing conflict with someone, One option is Conflict Coaching, an unique and emerging resource that may be beneficial. Conflict Coaches provide encouragement, advice, prayer, support and informal instruction in basic peacemaking principles to equip individuals to

personally address conflict with another. The process of self-reflection is not intended to identify where blame lies or who is at fault. The purpose is to sufficiently prepare your heart for a personal encounter with conflict that glorifies God.

What sin or heart issue on my part has contributed to the conflict? How might my response to a hurt or offense have intensified the division? In most types of conflict, there is some degree of contribution that we must acknowledge. Our contribution could be an outward offense, such as an angry outburst or conduct that advanced our own interests at another's expense, or it could be a heart condition, such as harboring bitterness or gossiping about the other person. Either way, we must first confront our offenses against others and against God, repent of our sins, and move forward with an attitude of humility and grace if we hope to see reconciliation or experience peace.

Go To Your Brother

Romans 12:18 "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men."

Matthew 18:15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone."

Matthew 5:23-24 “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. “

Galatians 6:1 “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

This approach is vastly counter-cultural. Our obligation as Christians is to do everything we can to restore peace to relationships, regardless of the other person’s role in the conflict or posture toward reconciliation. This can be an extremely intimidating proposition. We may feel that we know that the other person wants nothing to do with us. We might fear being confronted in an angry tirade of accusations. Nevertheless, God calls us to “go,” not wait for someone else to make the first move.

It’s important to keep in mind that the call to “go” is not a call to declare war. It is not an instruction to arm yourself with an arsenal of evidence, excuses, justification, and quick retorts. If we have taken the first step of self-reflection seriously, we should be prepared to humble ourselves, confess our sins before the other party, and request forgiveness. And when confronting and acknowledging sin in another’s role in the conflict, we should seek to do so graciously, in love, rather than righteous condemnation. Often it is by God’s grace alone that can we approach the conflict with love and grace, honoring the other person as created in the image of God, and one of God’s beloved children. Pray that God would transform your heart and “go” to your brother with an attitude of love and mercy.

God calls us to pursue peace amongst believers, and we honor God when we make every effort, and utilize a variety of resources in the name of reconciliation.

Parties in a lawsuit may yearn for their “day in court,” an opportunity to make their case and present evidence of the other person’s wrongs. However, most often, especially in family courts (divorce/custody), there is rarely a “winner.” Court-determined outcomes are often lose-lose. Neither party gets everything they wanted, and they have both paid dearly, in both attorney fees and, perhaps more costly, any hope of restoring a peaceful relationship.

God understood the perils of the secular legal system. He warned of the risks of submitting a dispute between believers to the secular Court. And he called believers to something different. We are held to a

different standard in how we live and love others. Why then would we resolve disputes according to a worldly standard? While the secular legal process may be necessary to obtain a full resolution of some kinds of disputes (i.e., divorce), Christians can still obtain resolutions to their conflicts in a way that glorifies God, honors one another, and restores peace.

We honor God when we seek to follow his commands and trust His wisdom through even the most difficult times of conflict. When we strive to reflect God’s love, forgiveness, grace, and mercy to those we conflict with, we provide a beautiful witness to God’s character and glorify Him. Peace is possible if we look to Him.

Mathew 5:9: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called Children of God.

Adapted from Biblical Conflict Resolution by Laura Bernero. DenverInstitute.org

The Book of Ephesians (6:10-20)

In Ephesians 6:10-20 Paul says to "be strengthened", "put on the full armor of God" and "stand!" Why? "So that you can take your stand against the Devil's schemes." (vs 11) "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood...but against the powers of this dark world...and the spiritual forces of evil..." (vs 12). We must be strengthened by the mighty power of the Lord because we do not want to crumble when the evil one tempts us. Our strength is not in our resources and abilities but in our *union with Jesus Christ and His mighty power*. The strength that is mentioned in verses 10, 11 and 13 implies that the Devil can be resisted as we walk in the Lord's strength. We must remember, the critical battle has already been won! The Devil has been *defeated! Christ is Lord, and we are in Him!* When Jesus was doing battle with Satan here on Earth, He was ready and equipped with the full armor of God. We must be ready and equipped with the same.

Belt of Truth (6:14a) Believers must be truth-speaking people. We must live the Messiah's truth and speak His truth, displaying the characteristics of our victorious King. Don't give Satan a foothold by neglecting to be a person of truth in your language, behavior and attitude. "The truth is in Jesus" (4:21). Coming to Jesus, believing in Jesus, resting in Jesus is coming to the truth. Live in that truth throughout the day.

Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14b) In this, Paul is referring to right living as in the verses of 4:24 and 5:9. We are to put on those righteous qualities associated with our new life in Christ, the same righteous qualities reflected in the life of Jesus. Put on

this breastplate of righteousness so you do not give an inch to Satan in the areas of impurity, lust, greed or injustice, Realize *who you are* in Christ, and live out that new identity in righteous living.

Gospel Shoes of Peace (6:15) To be ready for battle, a soldier must have the right footwear. Paul is saying, believers should always be ready to share the gospel. Be ready to herald the good news of Christ. Isaiah says "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the herald, who proclaims peace..." (52:7) Paul says Jesus is our peace. We are reconciled to God and enjoy the peace of God through the death of Jesus. Paul also says Jesus proclaimed the good news of peace. Jesus was the ultimate one with beautiful feet who came with His gospel shoes announcing peace to the Jews and Gentiles. In the midst of this passage on warfare is a message of peace. This is the difference with our mission and other religious missions. We are not taking life; we are offering life. We are willing even to lay our lives down, because Christ laid His down for us, and we know He will raise us up.



Shield of Faith (6:16) This is not a small shield, this is a shield as large as a door. This shield is to cover our whole body. Biblical writers often refer to God as a shield (Ps 18:30; 28:7; Prov 30:5). We have a shield to protect us from the darts of the enemy when we put on Christ, believing the promises of God. As we believe what He says about us, what He says is ours.

Helmet of Salvation (6:17a) To resist the Devil, we must be assured of salvation. Go to God daily and be reminded of the great object of your faith: Christ. Our hope is in Him. If you are trusting in Him, then do not listen to the Devil's lies. You are alive with Christ, redeemed, forgiven, reconciled, raised with Christ, and seated with Christ. Put your helmet on and do not let Satan get into your head.

Sword of the Spirit (6:17b) This is an offensive weapon. The believer must take up the sword and engage the enemy. Paul identifies the sword with God's Word. We are to be in the Word and speak the Word. We are given access to the weaponry of the Messiah for battle when we are united with Him. We are to speak the gospel in this dark world so that those who are held captive by the evil one may go free. In the garden, the Satan raised doubt and suspicion about God's Word. But do not be deceived. You can trust

God's Word. You need God's Word. Do not go into battle without a sword. Read it. Meditate on it. Pray it. Proclaim it!

We are to take up the sword of the Spirit prayerfully. Prayer is the means by which we call on God to help us in our battle. What a gift it is to be able to communicate with our God! We are to pray at all times. We pray with all kinds of prayers and requests. We should stay alert with all perseverance. And we should always keep praying for all the saints (fellow believers) (vs 18). The focus on "all" emphasizes the fact that because all of life is war, all of life must be lived in prayer.

In verses 19-20, Paul requests prayer for himself. He is an ambassador, a representative of Jesus; as are we. Pray for others as they share the gospel. Why? Satan does not want us to have the right words to say or to be bold in the face of conflict. Evangelism is spiritual warfare. The culture opposes it. So we need

God's power to do it faithfully.

As we close the book of Ephesians, the question begs – "Are you a Christian?" Have you turned from sin and placed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you love Him with an undying love that will go on into eternity? Soon we will see Jesus, and then we will put our weapons down. Then we will not regret having put all our trust in His perfect work, and we will not regret having been faithful soldiers engaged in His mission.

Source "Christ-Centered Exposition" by David Platt (used in the Salem Women's Bible study).

Church Financial Update

Before the pandemic hit Salem Church, we were doing financially better than last year at this time. With church services being suspended by the State of Ohio, we need more than ever for our church family to continue their giving during this trying time. Church offerings should be mailed to the church at:

**Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894**

Needed to Date: \$51,708.24
Received to Date: \$54,755.52

Salem Sights



June 7 – Steve Richards and family



June 14 – Shania Profit, Andrew Emery and Chance Mosier greeted as recent graduates



Pastor Tom praying with the Time for Children



June 28 – Special speaker, Coach Mark Zerbe

Salem Facebook and FM Radio

During the coronavirus outbreak, our Facebook pages are: “**Salem Presbyterian Church Venedocia**” for our Facebook Live Sunday Service posting, and the Group Page is “**Salem United Presbyterian Church**” for spiritual churchwide discussions. Our shorrange FM station is **FM 87.9** for the Venedocia-area during service times.



June 14 – Junior Bell Choir special music

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The Vacation Bible School is scheduled for this month on Tuesday and Wednesday July 28 and 29th. The times are from 9:30 to 11:30 AM. The Theme is on “Creation.”
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IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Remember our elderly members, soldiers, and college students with cards and visits.

Bartie Jones

407 Stony Ridge Dr.
Sandusky, OH 44870-5468

Marjorie Rhoades

Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Marian Morris at Hearth & Home

1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati – Graduating

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

Madison Pugh – USCGA | 15 Mohegan Ave.
8785 Chase Hall | New London, CT 06320

Condolences

Condolences to the families of Chad Eutsler & Julie (Hirn) Sheets

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

(U.S. Coast Guard)
311 Oak Street #109
Oakland, CA 94607

Phoebe Eutsler (Army)

Micah Linger

Grandson of Doris Evans
(U.S. Marine Corps)

Butch Eutsler

(National Guard)

Birthdays

1 Gloria Leiter	1 Owen Pugh
2 Lynette Lloyd	6 Charles Boroff
10 Vern Hobbs	10 Mark Zielke
12 Kristen Dunlap	13 Cory McCollow
15 Barb Good	16 Ron Owens
18 Marjorie Eutsler	22 Dave Rees
24 Evan Pugh	25 Kent McClure
26 Brent Price	29 Heather McClure
29 Doug Strickler	31 Kristyn Jones
31 Zach Wise	

Anniversaries

1 Jack & Gwenda Blackmore	15 Tuzz & Liz Hobbs
25 David & Nancy Jo Breese	24 Bill & Ruth Evans
27 Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	

Prayer Concerns

Connie Bassett (breast cancer)
Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)
Barry Coil (stroke)
Kathy Comer
Amy Cunningham (Fibromyalgia)
John Davis (stroke)
Cathy Donnal (health issues)
Kent DuCheney (surgery)
Aiden Ellerbrock (serious injuries from a fall)
Betty Ellis (rapidly failing health)
Catie Emery (nightmares)
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Jerry Holscher
Tim Huster (cancer)
Connie Johnson (cancer)
Jan Jones (health issues)
Paula Jones (healing from fall)

Dale Kiesza (leg operation)
Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
Linda Lissey (cancer)
Bob Louth, Jr (prostate health)
LuAnn (family issues)
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
David Morris (Zeb)
Marian Morris
Terry Profit
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)
Marjorie Rhodes
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Ron Sheets (motorcycle accident)
Doug Smith (Jen Pugh's father)
Mary Strayer (cancer)
Martha Jean Evans Vasquez

July 2020

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	6	7 7pm Women's Bible Study	8	9	10	11
12 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 5:00 Trustee Meeting	13	14 7pm Women's Bible Study	15	16	17	18
19 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Session Meeting	20	21 7pm Women's Bible Study	22	23	24	25
26 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	27	28 VBS 9:30 -11:30am 7pm Women's Bible Study	29 VBS 9:30 -11:30am	30	31	

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
July 5	Rex & Lisa Lloyd		Dave Van Tilburg
July 12	Tuzz & Liz Hobbs	Doris Evans	Connie O'Neill
July 19	Jeff & Kim Coil	Doris Evans	Becky Reichard
July 26	Todd & Jayne Morris	Doris Evans	Becky Reichard
Ushers	Bob & Kathy McCollow	Greeter:	Bob McCollow

Salem Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894



June 15th – Steve Richards taking care of children.

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

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Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131

Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

**July 2020
REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY
YEAR B**

5th Sunday after Pentecost – July 5

Gen. 24:34-38,42-49,56-67 Psalm 45:10-17
Rom. 7:15-25a Matt. 11:16-29, 25-30

6th Sunday after Pentecost – July 12

Gen. 25:19-34 Psalm 119:105-112
Rom. 8:1-11 Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23

7th Sunday after Pentecost – July 19

Gen. 28:10-19a Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Rom. 8:12-25 Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43

8th Sunday after Pentecost – July 26

Gen. 29:15-28 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
Rom. 8:26-39 Matt. 13:31-33, 44-52