

General Topics :: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood

My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/1/20 14:03

My view of the SI neighborhood

There has been much discussion as of late on the SI forums about certain doctrinal positions being "extreme" and/or "decisive". I would like to put forth an analogy in an attempt to provide understanding to this issue.

Here goes...

My neighbor and I have a fence running between our yards. This fence has a gate that can be used when we want to enter each others yard. We often visit, talk, and discuss various topics across the fence. There are also times we use the gate and enter the other's yard; sometimes even the other's house.

We share many meals with each other. We worship together and are often engaged in Bible study together. We love each other and consider each other to be brothers. We are so often at each other's house many wonder why we have a fence at all.

We could remove the fence but a property line would still exist.

For example, the doctrines of grace, as compared to other views and understandings, are clearly on opposite sides of the fence, but they need not be viewed as coming from the most "extreme" distant points of the yard. Once again, there is a clear and undeniable separation, yet to say this "property line" is "extreme" does not work for me. We stand right next to each other. We are united as children of God. We embrace each other as brothers.

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The fences are not the problem in the neighborhood; it's their size and style. We should keep our fences (theological property lines) low, so that we do not lose sight of our extended family. We should also maintain gates so as not to bar and prevent fellowship. Let us respect each others property lines; for each has the right to raise his family on the foundations God reveals to him through His Word.

Perhaps this analogy is a bit over simplified, it obviously breaks down in some areas, but I believe it works to show that differing opinions do not have to be as "decisive" and/or "extreme" as some would have us believe.

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood, on: 2009/1/20 14:33

Quote:

tjservant wrote:

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There has been much discussion as of late on the SI forums about certain doctrinal positions being "extreme" and/or "divisive".

I have never minded being considered "extreme", in fact most of the time it is a compliment. As far as being divisive goes, Christ came not to bring peace but division. What must be determined is, is the division being made by Christ or is it a division originating only from men?

Luke 12:51-53 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: 52 For from hence forth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Everyone seems to understand that there is a great end-time deception, few will ever consider that they themselves are among the deceived. It is part of fallen human nature to think we are too smart for that, time will tell....

Old Joe

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/1/20 14:53

Good points Old Joe

I would add to my post:

There are differences between tolerating the immature, letting people grow and develop, and accepting damnable heresy as truth.

My post is not one on accommodating the devil, but one of accepting Christians.

My ramblings are usually as clear as mud...

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood, on: 2009/1/20 15:01

nice! amen. and amen.

Quote:

-----I do not believe we should continue to let certain theological constructs be as decisive as they have been.

preach it!!

Quote:

-----We should keep our fences (theological property lines) low, so that we do not lose sight of our extended family

your hitting the mark!!!

Quote:

-----We should also maintain gates so as not to bar and prevent fellowship. Let us respect each others property lines; for each has the right to raise his family on the foundations God reveals to him through His Word.

that's a Word, God graced you this afternoon with a bit of prophecy, I must say!!

Quote:

-----Perhaps this analogy is a bit over simplified

GOOD! Simple is good, and so is God. You edified me, and for that I am grateful.

In Jesus' love, neil

Re: - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2009/1/20 15:08

What pleases GOD's heart is a community of believers united in purpose, in one accord with His truth and His Spirit. We're not there yet!!

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood, on: 2009/1/20 15:26

Thank you TJ for that analogy what a breath of fresh air!! 8-)

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood - posted by ccchhhrrriiiss (), on: 2009/1/20 17:30

Thank you, tjservant!

Quote:

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In addition to this analogy, consider whether or not we should even make DOCTRINES out of what are merely persuasions to begin with!

What do I mean? What one might call the "doctrine of grace" might be viewed as an "offensive" title to those who disagree with the nature of that teaching. As such, here lies a point of division: One person wants to declare their belief as DOCTRINE in a definitive sense. Those on both sides who hold to opposing doctrinal views tend to look on the other side as having not understood the matter well or not having heard the Lord in its regard. This might not be the situation with those of us who frequent these forums, but this is the situation for many in the Body of Christ.

There is nothing wrong with teaching good Biblical DOCTRINE...as long as those doctrines are clearly presented by the Scriptures. In addition, there is nothing wrong with teaching PERSUASION...if it is clearly identified as such. Unfortunately, many of today's churches spend most of their time and effort passing persuasion off as doctrine (or vice versa) -- and not making a clear distinction between the two.

What doctrines should we teach as DOCTRINE? Do we separate ourselves from the brethren (and fellowship with certain in local churches or denominations) over a matter of what is merely some person or group's persuasion about a matter?

I truly believe what you are saying! Yet I think that we need to do a better job as believers (and teachers) by making a bold distinction between what is truly a doctrine of the Church (versus what is a persuasion held as a "doctrine" of a specific group or person). If we can do this...and consider others before ourselves...then we might develop a true unity in the Body of Christ.

Good post, brother!

:~)

Re: - posted by live4jc, on: 2009/1/20 17:58

Hi TJ,

I appreciate this analogy and the spirit behind it. From my perspective, what brings division and therefore must be avoided, would be statements that suggest that our neighbour is not truly our neighbour (if you catch my drift in terms of the neighbour analogy)

I've always appreciated the power of a good analogy. The neighbour analogy is a good one, in that it reminds us that we are all in the same neighbourhood, the same family. The body analogy, used by the apostle Paul, also reminds us of our interconnectness in Christ.

I think as long as we love and respect one another (in Christian love) and we recognize one another as neighbours, then the bond of unity will be maintained. The other thing is that if we do recognize one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, that means that yes at times we may explain to our neighbour where the boundary is between our yards, but we will also spend lots of time having one another over for coffee ;~)

By the way, do you enjoy any sports ? I like hockey, but soccer is my favourite sport.

You know, internet communication is a great thing, but it does have its limitations. Face to face, if we were to chat about doctrine, we might also chat about politics, or the weather or whatever, and that does help to cement the bonds of friendship. I'm not suggesting that these things 'need' to exist in online communication and I believe our overriding focus should be on the spiritual...but I do think they are helpful.

However, even within the limitations of this framework we call 'the chatroom' (and there are many great things that this environment has to offer), I believe God can knit the hearts of believers together, as they make Christ their common ground.

Again, thanks for this good post, It's a good starting point which can be helpful in our goal of discussing things in a constructive manner :~)

In Jesus,
John

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2009/1/20 18:00

Two quotes come to mind.

"Don't ever take a fence down until you know the reason it was put up."
G.K. Chesterton.

"Good fences make good neighbors."
Robert Frost in the Mending Wall

MC

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood - posted by HeartSong, on: 2009/1/20 21:36

Quote:

-----Old_Joe wrote:

What must be determined is, is the division being made by Christ or is it a division originating only from men?

This is a very good question.

Additionally one must ask, is the problem coming from without? or is the problem coming from within. Is it what your neighbor is saying? or is it what you are hearing.

One must also remember that when the Holy Spirit is working, the one that He is working through often has no idea that his neighbors toes are being stepped on.

It is my opinion that if we were operating in the Spirit, there would not be any need for a fence.

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood, on: 2009/1/20 21:44

Quote:

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thanks brother for posting this...what a tender simple analogy! Something to say about being child like in our thinking...why make it so complicated!? Well done and greatfull that you took the time to post this.

Re: My view of the SermonIndex neighborhood - posted by Maloy, on: 2009/1/27 11:26

Doctrine is certainly very important; however, if you and I are in a cave hiding from the anti-Christ or some other persecutor of the saints, our concerns will not be doctrinal. We are at war and we must fight together until we see His face.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2009/1/27 11:38

A Word To End all Strife and Divisiveness on SI Forums

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=12335&forum=35&35

Testing all things on SermonIndex

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=21919&forum=35&8

Here are a listing of the rules and behaviors expected by forum users:

MUST READ: SermonIndex Forum Disclaimer / Community Rules

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=14144&forum=13&24

Forum Disclaimer / Community Rules