

**Articles and Sermons :: Speaking into one another's life...****Speaking into one another's life... - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/11/15 16:56**

"If only we the body, those who call themselves brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus would be willing to live and walk with one another with such love in our hearts to always speak truth with one another. This quote really has given me much to think about. Thought I would share with whom ever the Lord leads to read it through.

God Bless

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If we invoke the deadly dictum of Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" are we not then subject to the curse of God: "His blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezek. 32:18).

Where Christians live together the time must inevitably come when in some crisis one person will have to declare God's Word and will to another. It is inconceivable that the things that are of utmost importance to each individual should not be spoken by one to another. It is unchristian consciously to deprive another of the one decisive service we can render to him. If we cannot bring ourselves to utter it, we shall have to ask ourselves whether we are not still seeing our brother garbed in his human dignity which we are afraid to touch, and thus forgetting the most important thing, that he, too, is still a man like us, a sinner in crying need of God's grace. He has the same great necessities that we have, and needs help encouragement, and forgiveness as we do.

The basis upon which Christians can speak to one another is that each knows the other as a human. Though with all his dignity, each man is lonely and lost if he is not given help. This is not to make him contemptible nor to disparage him in any way. On the contrary, it is to accord him the one real dignity that man has, namely, that, though he is a sinner, he can share in God's grace and glory and be God's child. This recognition gives to our brotherly speech the freedom and candor that it needs.

We speak to one another on the basis of the help we both need. We 'admonish one another' (Heb.3:12-13) to go the way that Christ bids us to go. We warn one another against the disobedience that is our common destruction. We are gentle and we are severe with one another, for we know both God's kindness and God's severity. Why should we be afraid of one another, since both of us have only God to fear? Why should we think that our brother would not understand us, when we understood very well what was meant when somebody spoke God's comfort or God's admonition to us, perhaps in words that were halting and unskilled? Or do we really think there is a single person in this world who does not need either encouragement or admonition? Why, then, has God bestowed Christian brotherhood upon us?

The more we learn to allow others to speak the Word to us, to accept humbly and gratefully even severe reproaches and admonitions, the more free and objective will we be in speaking ourselves. The person whose touchiness and vanity make him spurn a brother's earnest censure cannot speak the truth in humility to others; he is afraid of being rebuffed and of feeling that he has been aggrieved. The touchy person will always become a flatterer and very soon he will come to despise and slander his brother.

But the humble person will stick both to truth and to love. He will stick to the word of God and let it lead him to his brother. Because he seeks nothing for himself and has no fears for himself, he can help his brother through the Word. Nothing can be more compassionate than the personal admonition that calls a brother back from the path of sin. It is mercy, and ultimate offer of genuine fellowship, when we allow nothing but God's word to stand between us, both judging and succoring. Then it is not we who are judging (1Cor.5:9-6:3, John 12:47-48). We serve him even when we must speak the judging and dividing Word of God to him, even when, in obedience to God, we must break off fellowship with him.

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Life Together"