

“Connecting & Contributing”
November 3, 2013

John 13:31-37

- **Sharp contrast. Jesus: “Love one another”;** **Peter: “I will...”** (*Self-focused vs. others-focused*)
- **Wide diversity among disciples.** (*Simon the Zealot & Judas, a violent Jewish Nationalist—hated Rome; started riots; notorious for violence—**Matthew** tax collector—hated by Jews; complicit with Rome) (**Peter, James, John, Andrew**—4 relatives; fishermen—**Bartholomew**, AKA Nathaniel- of a royal blood line) **Their love for one another attracted world’s attention***)
- **Acts 2- “One accord” is a miracle! Baffles the world.**
- **Tertullian, early Christian author- “‘Look,’ they say, ‘how they love one another. And how they are ready to die for each other.’”**

“Satan”- means **“accuser”** (*katagoros- “pronounce & divide in town square”*)
creating an **“us/them”** scenario

“Devil”- means **“divider”** or **“gossip”** (*Prov. 16:28- “a gossip separates close friends”*)

His ultimate agenda—separate us from God & one another at the heart level.
His ultimate tactic—nudge us toward Tree of Knowledge—generating the attitude- **“I know better than you do. Therefore, I don’t need you.”**

- **Moved Adam to say: “This woman You gave me.” Setting himself as superior to both of them.**
- **Moved church at Laodicea to say: “We are rich and in need of nothing.”**
- **Moved Corinthian believers to think their gift was enough (1 Cor. 12:21- “I have no need of you.”)**
- **“Any Kingdom divided” will experience two dilemmas:**
 - **“Ruined”- “lonely”**
 - **“Not stand”- “lack stability”** (Matthew 12:25)

Romans 12:21 NLT- “Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.”

PROP- By connecting with and contributing to one another we will manifest the unity Jesus commands and prays for.

Colossians 1:12 & 13- “Giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.”

- **“Light/darkness”—openness or obscurity**

- **Expressing our needs & connecting relationally go hand in hand.**
 - Romans 12:5- “mutually dependent on one another”
 - Our needs are meant to be met in relationships
 - “your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Matthew 6:8)—yet He repeatedly says, “Ask Me.” Why??? Because that’s where relationship happens!
- **TRUST is built in TRANSPARENCY**
 - We are responsible to disclose our hearts to others
 - Not everyone is “trustworthy” (Pr. 25:19- “rotten tooth”)
 - Yet “love grown cold” (Mt. 24:12) not the answer
 - Hurt hearts can heal—hardened ones don’t (Heb. 3:8)
- Those who want the benefits of connecting (w/o being willing to pay the price)—settle for “counterfeit comforts”—*substance abuse, pornography, shopping, carbohydrates, adrenaline, pursuit of money, religious obsessions.* And these excesses have painful results.
- We were made to have our needs met through relationships with people we don’t control.

1 Peter 3:8-11- “All of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.”

When we SEEK PEACE—we CONNECT—when we SEEK POWER—we CONTROL

3 Ways to Communicate:

1. **INSECURE communication.** (*Passive; false humility that says, “Your perspective matters. Mine doesn’t.”*)
2. **INTIMIDATING communication.** (*A proud heart that says, “I know better than you. My perspective is the only one that counts.”*) (*Sometimes it overpowers; at other times it uses flattery, yet condescends and manipulates.*)
3. **INTIMATE communication.** (*Born out of a healthy heart that says, “We both matter! My thoughts, feelings, and needs matter—and so do yours!”*)
 - “Speaks the truth in Love” to BOTH the insecure ones (“I need to hear from you”) and the intimidating ones (“We will continue this conversation when you can be respectful.”)
 - This is where we experience “WE have the mind of Christ” & “we grow from what every joint supplies”

Philippians 2:1-5 The Passion Translation

