

BAD FEELINGS AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE

By Keith Greer

The wise man Solomon once said, "**there was nothing new under the sun**". Mankind will continue to have difficulty in dealing with problems between themselves. Yet, this is not to be so among God's people. Sadly, I've seen firsthand this is not always the case.

God's word concerning our conduct in this area is too plain for any to misunderstand. Please give careful attention to these passages:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." {John 13:34,35}

"He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now." {1 John 2:9}

"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." {1 John 3:15}

"If someone says, 'I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?' {1 John 4:20} Can these passages make it any plainer?

What about brethren we disagree with? Does our conduct towards them change?

"And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." {2 Thessalonians 3:14,15}

Paul wrote the first book of Corinthians to a group he rebuked very strongly. Many of their practices Paul commanded them to change. How did he feel about these brethren?

"I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, "{1 Corinthians 1:4} Say what Paul? Thank God for them? How could he? Does this surprise you? Did Paul compromise his message to these brethren? No way! If you read the second letter, you'll see these brethren repented of their error!

Would that have ever come about if Paul had treated them with ill will? Ignored them like they had a plague? Spoken evil towards them? Never talk with them? Just bad mouth them to other brethren or even to our personal families who are not even a member of the Lord's church! All this without making any move to bring about their repentance, if sin has taken place? **Think about it.**

So what is my point? Sadly, this very approach that some of my brethren have used against me personally. Brethren, with whom I worshipped with for five years, others who I was presently working with, and some, who have never personally met me. How do I know? Let me give you some examples and you tell me.

If they see me, they do not speak. They go out of their way to avoid me and my family. Just a few have ever come and talked with me about the false accusations leveled by a false teacher. One so called gospel preacher did not even have the backbone to accept the fact that he had been caught in a number of lies. This congregation believes it is conservative in its practices and teachings. Nothing could be farther from the truth!

Maybe you might be wondering what is prompting this article. Is this just all sour grapes? No. I'm reaching out in hopes that brethren wake up before it is eternally too late who are guilty of such conduct. How they ever think they will see the gates of heaven, with ill will towards me or any other brother, is beyond me. Seems to me we are commanded to help all of God's people to get to heaven – not just the ones I like personally! May God give them time and a penitent heart! ***