



# Church of Christ

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## Heart to Heart...

“There are six things which the Lord hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.” (Prov. 6:16-19) The Lord has a hatred for certain things in particular. He hates any sin, but, there are certain things people do that He absolutely abhors! I want to focus briefly on the last thing listed; *“one who spreads strife among brothers.”*

Strife is easily spread. Strife is nothing more than quarrels that make people divide. People don't like certain things or ideas, so they quarrel over them not realizing they may be making people choose sides and divide. How does one *“spread strife among brothers?”* It can be caused by voicing opinions to others causing them to side with their opinions. It leads to hard feelings and divides people, rather than bringing peace and unity of the Spirit. Strife can be spread just by making little statements to others, causing them to question a situation.

Strife is a deed of the flesh and will cost people their souls. (Gal. 5:20) Strife usually comes because of enmities. Most don't realize this. Enmity is also a deed of the flesh. Enmity is a hostility that is in the heart and mind of an individual because they feel **unjustly** treated. One that has enmity has an underlying hostile sentiment that never was resolved in their heart. In other words, they are bitter and resentful. It's really an unforgiving spirit. What's worse, the enmity blinds their own minds to see their own sinfulness. They feel justified when they act the way they do. It leads to strife. Strife will divide brethren and is in opposition to the things of God.

“Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:3) The people of God are diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit. The Spirit of God only promotes and works for peace in the lives of His people, the church (and in your personal relationships). How close to the things of God is one who spreads strife? If one can't forgive and let go of things they think they were unjustly wronged in, where is the cross of Christ in that? Where is the forgiveness of sin? It's missing! When one will not let things go, where do they walk? That unforgiving spirit, that hurt, they think they have been wronged in, becomes a boiling point and it seethes in their heart. Slowly but surely, when opportunities present themselves, they let it be known with comments or actions how upset they are. They talk against this or that, while the whole time, the real motive is their unforgiving hearts. They mask the real problem. They are miserable and empty, not realizing their spiritual dilemma. Strife becomes full blown and they start spreading their discontent among others. What's worse, they become an abomination in the eyes of God, only to end up losing their souls.

May we guard our hearts and allow the death of Jesus to be our guide and hope. Be forgiving, as Christ forgave you, and enmities won't be a part of your life, which will lead you to strife and abhorred in the eyes of God! Think about it!!!

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